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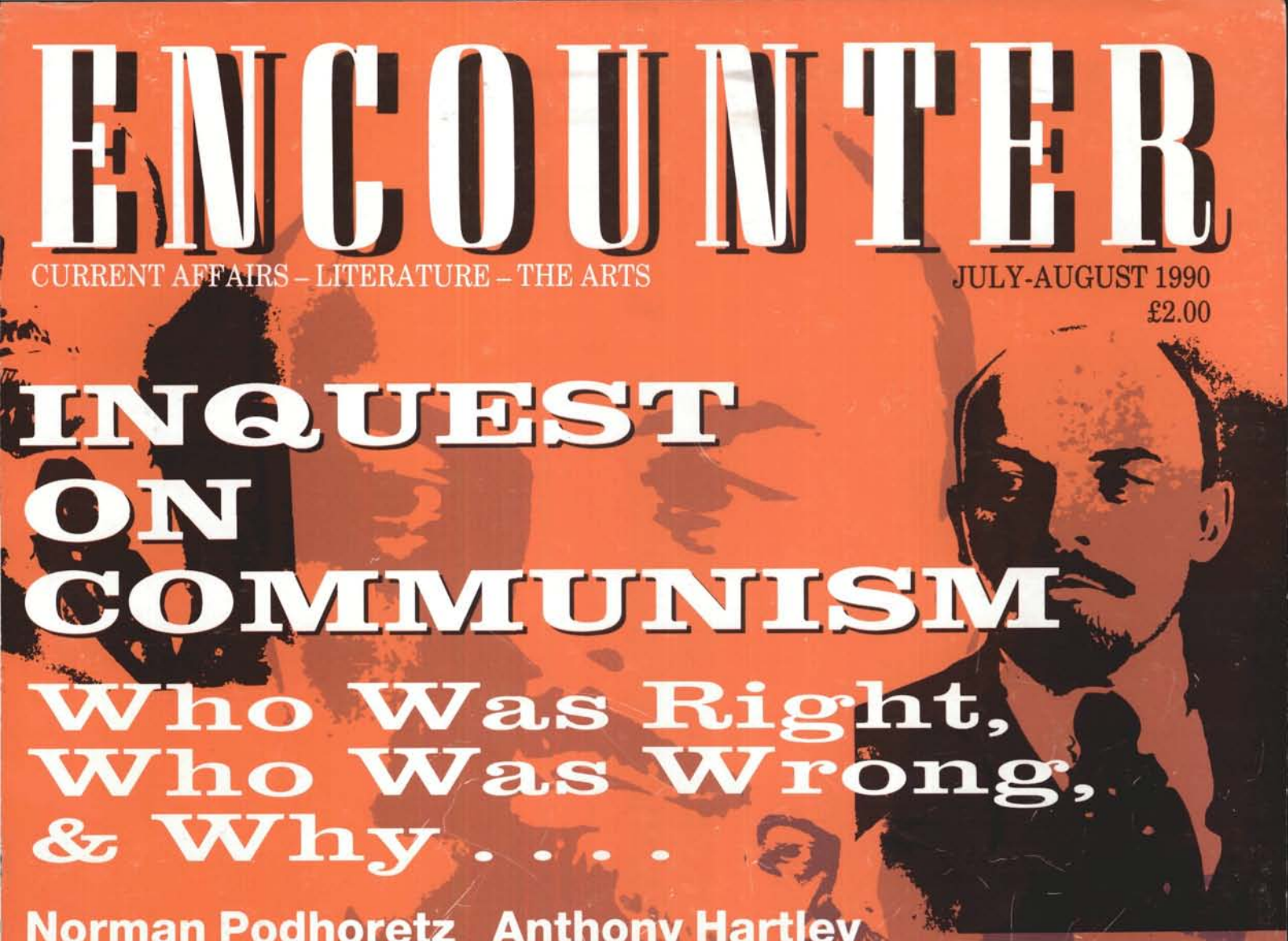

INQUEST ON COMMUNISM

Who Was Right, Who Was Wrong, & Why . . .

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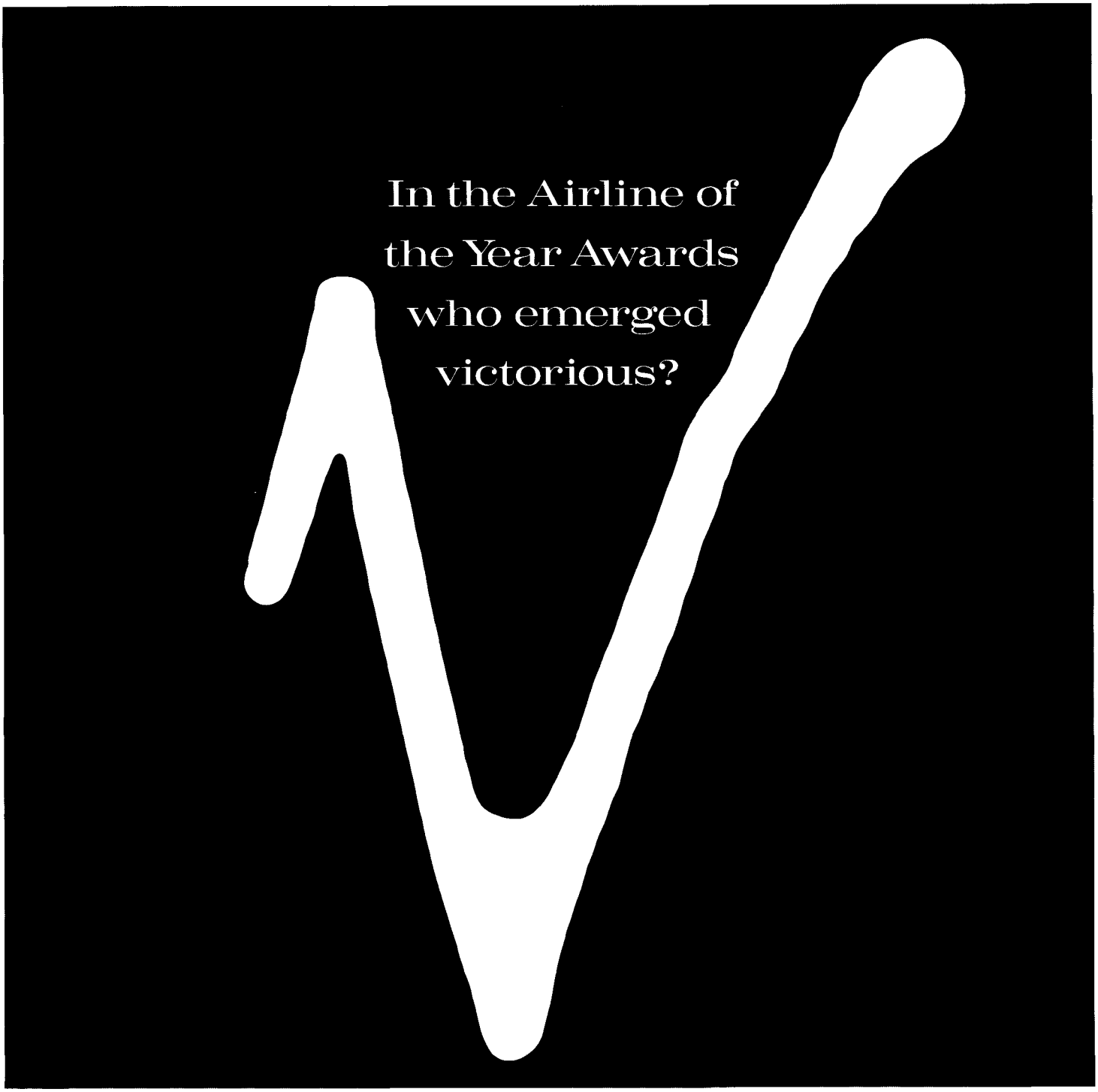

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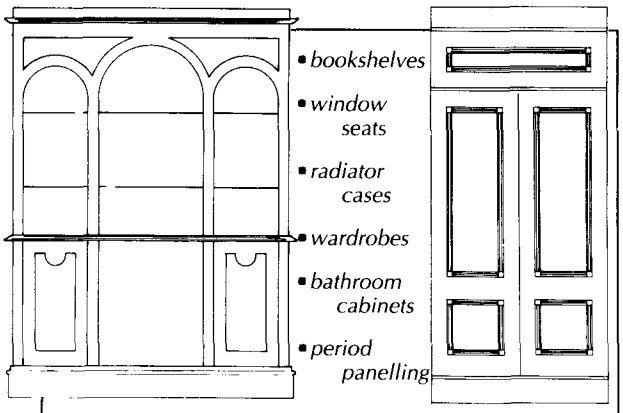

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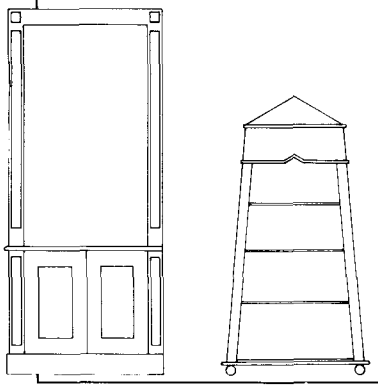

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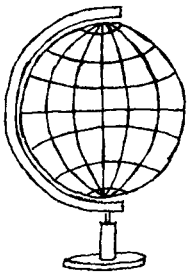
A Symposium

Who was Right, Who was Wrong, & Why

An Inquest on "the Death of Communism"



OUR SYMPOSIUM **deals with one special aspect of the dramas of the last year. In the collapse of so many totalitarian régimes, there emerged general recognition that the opposition to Communism on the part of anti-Communists, East and West, has been deep, justified, true.**

Zbigniew Brzezinski has recalled the isolation of lonely voices in the academic, intellectual, and journalistic worlds in his lifetime. Still he warns against "gloating". Enough is gained by the satisfied retrospect of democratic principles being loyally defended; of human rights insisted upon (with a simple single—not double—standard); of strong (and successful) foreign policies urged . . . i.e., only Western strength would preserve the peace and ultimately dissuade the adventurers of totalitarian ideology from aggression.

HOW DO *intellectuals feel now about "cold warriors" and "peace fighters"?—about "anti-anti-Communists" and "unilateral disarmers" and "neutralists"?—about the whole controversy over the issues raised by Koestler and Silone in R. H. S. Crossman's anthology, "The God That Failed", and, later, also by Milovan Djilas? Now it is not only the "gods" of the ideologues, but whole social systems, with armies and police forces, that have "failed"—indeed disintegrated. In those haunting lines of Thomas Hardy (always a sure guide to doom):*

"It always goes on", said a friend,
"Just the same in bright weathers or bleak."
But it came to an end.

"How will it come to an end . . .
Unless some convulsion attend?"
I often said, "What will be done
When it comes to an end?"

WE PUT **these questions to some of our regular contributors to answer in a personal or analytical manner (or both). Some name names or delve into the follies of ideological deception. Some tell an anecdote or sketch briefly a revised theory of a totalitarianism that wasn't total. Some others remember those who have been called "the martyrs" or "the prophets" in the movement of anti-Communist intelligentsia which has now issued in famous victories in Warsaw and Prague, in Budapest and East Berlin (and, one hopes, in Vilnius)—names like Hook, Silone, Koestler, Souvarine, among many others. . . . Others speculate on how these traditions can be adapted to the new tasks of building democratic and humane post-Communist societies.**

HISTORY *has many "cunning passages", but none more Eliotesque than the spectacle of hollow men—who praised reactionary revolutions, polluted progress, and the decrepit locomotive of history—conceding with bitter reluctance (if at all) that they had been wrong and that a few lonely voices over the decades since 1917 had been right after all.*

M.J.L.

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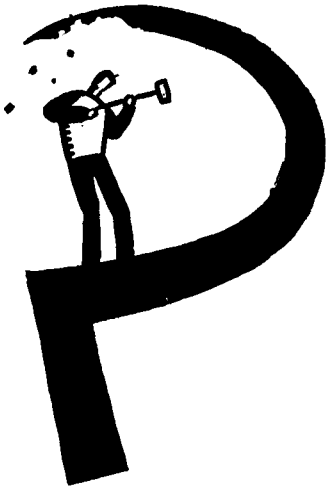
The Collapse

By Theodore Draper



THE QUESTION that haunts me about the collapse of the Communist régimes in Eastern Europe is just that: the collapse. I have not been able to find a satisfying answer, and so I must be satisfied with merely posing the question, which has not received enough attention. One question has led to another, with the result that I can mainly contribute what is at most a clarification of the question. Those who think they know the answer need go no further.

The reason why the collapse haunts me is that it was not supposed to have happened this way. The anti-Communist literature of the past decades was remarkably prescient, but it led us to expect a different dénouement. We read that the Communist régimes were ruled by a leadership and bureaucracy that represented the ultimate in brutality, omnipresence, deceit, and cynicism. To make their point, the writers tended to emphasise the overwhelming internal power of Communist régimes, not their brittleness or superficiality. One expected a long march of resistance, marked by sustained sacrifice or even blood-baths. This pattern of events may still take place in China but it has not occurred in Eastern Europe.

There clearly are two sides to such a collapse; it can be looked at from the top or from the bottom. The Communist hierarchies in Eastern Europe had the armed force to put down unrest and even rebellion, as they had done in the past. This method was tried only in Romania, and half-heartedly or at least briefly. It was successfully tried in Poland in 1981 but not in 1988-89. The most surprising case was that of East Germany, where the Communist leadership had a reputation for old-fashioned grimness and discipline.

This leads me to a further question: Have we just experienced a Communist collapse that resembles other collapses throughout history? For example, there may be the most startling resemblance between the Czarist and Communist collapses. Trotsky may have come close to the Communist collapse by describing the Czarist collapse in these terms:

> "The dynasty fell by shaking, like rotten fruit, before the revolution even had time to approach its first problems. . . ."

Or is this coincidence unique to Russia?

In other cases, the so-called élites had seemingly lost their will to dominate, their self-confidence, or their intellectual "legitimacy" before they were overthrown. In the Communist case, it will be necessary to know more about what has happened within the Communist régimes in the past decade—or much earlier—in order to fathom this phenomenon. As matters stand, we quite naturally get more information about the new popular forces and leaders than about the Communist dead wood that has been cast aside or that has fallen of its own weight. In any case, the comparative history of collapses is very inviting for possible clues or suggestiveness.

The Communists in Eastern Europe still had the armed force to put down the popular unrest, or at least to go down fighting. Why didn't they use it? This is the haunting question that still needs to be explained. It does not seem suffi-

THEODORE DRAPER, *a former member (1968-73) of the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, is the author of numerous books, including "Present History: On Nuclear War, Détente, and Other Controversies" (1984), and "A Present of Things Past: Selected Essays" (Hill and Wang, 1989).*

MAX BELOFF *was Gladstone Professor of Government and Public Administration, University of Oxford, from 1957-74, and Principal of the University College at Buckingham from 1974-79. In 1981 he was created a life peer. His most recent book is "Dream of Commonwealth, 1921-42" (1989).*

BRIAN CROZIER *is the co-founder and first director (1970-79) of the Institute for the Study of Conflict in London. A writer and consultant on international affairs, he is the author of biographies of Franco, de Gaulle, and Chiang Kai-shek.*

PAUL LENDVAI *was once called "the lonely latter-day voice of the Habsburg empire". His broadcasts from Vienna were heard throughout "Mittel-Europa" and his writings influenced a whole generation who remained behind when he fled Budapest in 1956. He has written often for* ENCOUNTER *(see, e.g., "A Traveller in Albania", May 1985).*

NORMAN PODHORETZ, *editor of "Commentary" magazine in New York, is the author of "Making It", a political memoir (1968), "Breaking Ranks" (1979), "Why We Were in Vietnam" (1982), and "The Bloody Crossroads" (1986).*

WALTER LAQUEUR *is a Professor at the Center for Strategic and International Studies at Georgetown University and Chairman of its International Research Council; he is also co-director of the Institute of Contemporary History in London.*

WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR. *is Editor-in-Chief of "National Review" and a nationally syndicated columnist in the USA.*

JULIUS GOULD *was Professor of Sociology at Nottingham University until 1982: in 1983 he was appointed Director of Research at the Institute of Policy Research. He is also Chairman of the Social Affairs Unit.*

LEOPOLD LABEDZ *wrote a column, "From the Other Shore", for many years in* ENCOUNTER. *He is the long-time editor of "Survey", a journal which specialised in Communist affairs. A collection of his essays, many of which first appeared in* ENCOUNTER, *was published under the title "The Use and Abuse of Sovietology" (1988).*

ANTHONY HARTLEY, *Co-editor of* ENCOUNTER, *is the author of "The State of England" and "Gaullism: The Rise and Fall of a Political Movement". He was editor of the monthly "Interplay" in New York and has served as a political analyst for many British newspapers.*

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cient to assume that Gorbachov told them that they were on their own, that they could no longer depend on Soviet intervention. Even so, he does not seem to have told them what to do, only what he was not prepared to do for them. Was it simply another case of abject dependence on the Soviet Party, even unto the bitter end?

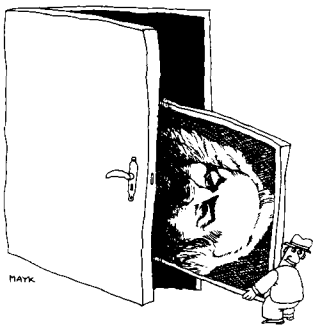
Seen from the bottom, the Communist collapse may be less problematic. When the pressure from above was suddenly released, the deprivations and resentments erupted from below. Yet the great mass demonstrations seem to have been the result of collapse rather than the cause. Their popular leaderships were rudimentary, as a result of which it has been difficult to organise a new pluralistic politics to follow the great deliverances. As Alexis de Tocqueville wrote of the collapse of the *ancien régime*: "On the very day the Revolution broke out, no one had any precise idea of what it was going to do. . . ."

In this respect, there was no time in Eastern Europe for the germination of new economic and political policies, let alone ideologies. Perhaps they were not needed, because the masses had something else—the example of the West. This factor is probably far more important in Eastern Europe than in the Soviet Union, especially in its Russian part. The West had to do nothing more to bring on the Communist collapse than to be itself.

For that reason, this collapse differs from that of the French *ancien régime* or of Czarism. The revolutions against them needed to believe that they were bringing something altogether new and untainted into the world. The present rebellions want to have what the West has: a known and practical reality. Because their past has been so much worse, they may well be satisfied with the relatively good instead of calling for a new utopia.

A Premature Obituary?

By Max Beloff



IT IS RIGHT to celebrate the memory of those who argued that the Communist ideal was always a hollow one, and who were unpersuaded that the legacy of Lenin could be anything but totalitarian. Such attitudes among the intelligentsia in the West were more difficult to maintain in France, Italy, and even the United States than in Britain, particularly during the period after the liberation of Europe from Nazi tyranny. More honour to those who did not go with the fashionable tide. Honour also to those who resisted the historical revisionism fuelled in the United States by the Viet Nam War, which strove to paint "the Cold War" as the product of American imperialism, dating from Hiroshima or some other point which would obliterate the degree of Soviet expansionism that was inherent in the Revolution from 1917 onwards, and was made manifest in Soviet conduct in Eastern Europe between 1944 and 1948.

Of course, "gloating" should (as Zbigniew Brzezinski recognised) always be eschewed. One's only regret must be that those who did so much to explode the totalitarian myth are not here to share in the rejoicing.

The danger, as I see it, is that the degree to which the myth of the Communist way has been exorcised is much exaggerated. Students of the Soviet scene who always suspected that the picture given by Soviet apologists was false have now been confirmed in their suspicions. Sense can at last be made of Soviet (and other East European) statistics, and we see that, if anything, our views were over-optimistic. The Soviet economy is much poorer and by the same token proportionately more militarised than we had been led to believe. But how far has this perception gone?

It is clear not merely that the Soviet version of Communism, as bequeathed by Stalin and little altered since, is hopelessly incapable of meeting the basic needs of the people—but that socialism itself, in whatever form, cannot do much better. Nor are the prospects for reform encouraging in the Soviet Union, though there may be glimmerings of hope elsewhere. For while a basically capitalist economy can stand a certain amount of state-ownership, the reverse is not true. One cannot introduce market-driven productivity into a system which retains general state-ownership. Even the partial success of the Chinese with agriculture is not conclusive. Indeed, the spectacle of Western experts on "privatisation" giving their advice to East European governments where none of the underlying structures of law and economic rationality are in place would provoke laughter were the consequences likely to be less tragic. One cannot hope to see things put right unless socialism itself is totally repudiated as an idea—however long the transition to something else may take in practice.[1]

The Universities of Oxford and Birmingham have applied to the Economic and Social Research Council for funds to set up a Centre for the Study of "the Transition" in Eastern Europe. I hope they get their grant; the task will not easily be completed.

For these simple lessons are by no means accepted in the way which phrases like "the Death of Communism" seem to suggest. Not merely are there countries still faithful to the Stalinist model—Viet Nam, Cuba, Albania—but it also inspires many parties and movements in other areas of the world. The African National Congress has, for instance, stuck to its line that the ending of *apartheid* must bring about the nationalisation of South Africa's economy. Clearly, nothing could do more to negate the beneficial effects which the ending of racial discrimination might hope to produce. Yet Mr Neil Kinnock, the leader of the "new

[1] For those who feel that these statements are too dogmatic, I recommend a reading of the "survey" of *perestroika* by Clive Crook in *The Economist* of 28 April.

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model" Labour Party in Britain, was prepared to go along with Mr Nelson Mandela in giving the Communist salute at the absurd apotheosis granted by the BBC to the ANC leader in Wembley Stadium earlier this year (during a four-hour televised pop concert).

SOCIALISM IS very much alive not only in the Third World, but in a number of European countries; and whatever the talk about the benefits of freedom in Eastern Europe, the fact is that what these peoples wish to do with their freedom (though they are some way yet from managing to do so) is to get rid of the socialism imposed upon them by their oppressors. Now that Mr Vaclav Havel is President of Czechoslovakia (as most people will continue to call his country), it is more than ever incongruous that a movement called "Charter 88" should exist in Britain and be largely run by socialists, in a ridiculous parody of the "Charter 77" movement which was a milestone on the Prague road to escape from totalitarian tyranny.

Much more striking, however, than the unwillingness of Western socialists to abandon their faith of over 70 years that in some sense the Soviet Union is still "a beacon of progress" and that criticism of it should always be muffled (lest the bourgeoisie gloat), has been the unwillingness of socialist leaders in the West to take in what has been happening. The "Gorbymania" that has powerfully affected West Germany and the USA, but also has its victims in other NATO countries, is understandable in the first two cases. Gorbachov's decision that the East European satellite régimes were expendable paved the way for German reunification. And since West Germany's wealth is available to bring about the transition, the East Germans look like being, materially speaking, the most obvious beneficiaries of the changes that have taken place.

The US case is different, and more sinister. For the American government, a Soviet leader who appears to offer the prospect of relations that would make the present extent of US defence commitment unnecessary and would, in particular, facilitate disengagement from Europe, is an obvious advantage. To convince themselves that Gorbachov is such a leader at the price of overlooking the Soviet Union's continued commitment to enhancing its military capabilities and its continued financial support for anti-American régimes and movements in the Third World has therefore not been too difficult. It may be said that in this they have support from highly sophisticated experts on and enthusiasts for Arms Control in Europe itself.[2]

It is only a short step from views of this kind to seeing the maintenance in power of Mr Gorbachov as the over-riding priority of Western foreign policy (as became clear during the Lithuanian crisis). And this, in turn, leads to the necessary corollary that, given sufficient Western support and encouragement, Gorbachov can succeed in his aim of reversing the downturn in the Soviet economy and in solving the "Nationalities Problem" which has been exacerbated by economic failure and by pollution of the environment, of which failure to cope with the Chernobyl aftermath is only the most tragic example.

It has, therefore, been necessary for people not by any means sympathetic to socialism at home to convince themselves that Gorbachov *must* mean by his reforms what they would mean if they were in his place, and to overlook his repeated commitment to old doctrine. Yet the effort being expended on maintaining the Soviet Empire runs counter to any proper handling of its economic and social problems. A centralised country of this vast size cannot successfully undertake reform. And one reason for the wishes for independence among the Baltic and Caucasian countries, and less overtly in the Ukraine and Moldavia, is the quite correct sense that on their own they could with better hope of success begin a proper process of economic reform within manageable units. The Russians might then have a better chance of doing something for themselves. Those who still believe in "the Left" and in socialist solutions should be made to ask themselves (as Estonians do) why Finland should enjoy a higher standard of living than Estonia.

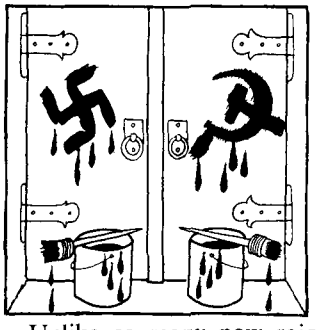
One does not have to be a Marxist to believe that epoch-making changes in the affairs of Empires and Nations are unlikely to be the fruit of one individual's imaginings and purposes. Gorbachov is an instrument of the historical process, not its animator. To talk of "the Death of Communism" is to assume too much. The capacity for self-delusion in the West has shown equally strong recuperative powers.

The debate is not over. It is only just beginning.

[2] See, for instance, Sir Michael Howard's article "1989: A Farewell to Arms?" in the Summer 1989 issue of *International Affairs*, and my "rejoinder" in the same issue.

Was It Wrong to be Right?

By Brian Crozier



WELL, WE *were* right after all. As we said all along, Communism was indeed a villainous con-trick, offering the broken eggs without the omelette, starving the peasants, murdering the innocent, and with nothing to show for it at the end of the long day save lengthy queues and empty shelves.

Unlike so many now rejoicing in the collapse of Communism, I have never belonged to a Marxist-Leninist party. In that sense, Communism was never, for me, a god that failed. In my late teens, however, the Marxist analysis of society and the evils of capitalism appeared to make sense.

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"The Great Depression" was the background that seemed to prove the point. I saw the rise of Mussolini, then of Hitler, as absolute evils, to be fought uncompromisingly; and in my simplicity I saw the Communists mainly as allies in the fight. Perhaps because most of the people I met were themselves Communists or older men of the Left, I was blind to the totalist symmetries between Fascism and Communism.

THIS SIMPLISTIC view was emotionally reinforced in 1935 when, as a penurious and politically naive student at Trinity College of Music, I began to write articles on music and art, and came under the influence of the Artists' International. Had I been told that this was a Communist "front", I would have needed a lesson on the meaning of that strange word.

A year or so later, at eighteen, I swallowed uncritically the fashionable view of the Spanish Civil War as the battle-ground between fascism and democracy. It seemed natural, therefore, that I should join Victor Gollancz's Left Book Club: the first book I received was Arthur Koestler's *Spanish Testament*; and the first special choice, available on request, the Webbs's monumental *Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation*. By then Sidney and Beatrice Webb had decided, on mature consideration, that the question-mark at the end of the title in the original edition could now be dropped.

It is hard to convey to those not alive in the late 1930s, or too young to understand, the enveloping force of prestigious Western writers such as Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells, André Gide, or even the Auden/Spender/Day-Lewis trio. The young, emerging writer of those days tended to take their general wisdom for granted, even if critical of them individually on other grounds. Intellectually, it was right to be Left.

MY FIRST signed writings appeared in the late Victor B. Neuburg's weekly *Comment* between 1935 and 1938. I have to say that I was politically out of my depth (admittedly at a time when I was far more interested in the arts than in politics). The fey, puckish Vicky (as Victor Neuburg was known) had launched the Zoists' club, which I attended regularly, and I was deeply impressed by the superior eloquence, industry, and dedication of the Communist members.

The first hackles of doubt were raised by the Hitler-Stalin Pact of 1939, although there seemed to be some substance in the argument that Chamberlain's sell-out at Munich had left Stalin with little option save to compose his differences with Hitler. But I could no longer see the Communists as "natural allies" in the "necessary war" against Fascism. Alienation deepened when Britain's Communist leader, Harry Pollitt, switched from endorsement of the War to aloofness on orders from Moscow because Stalin, having grabbed "his" half of Poland, had decreed that this was an "imperialist" war. The crushing of the gallant Finns was another alienating move.

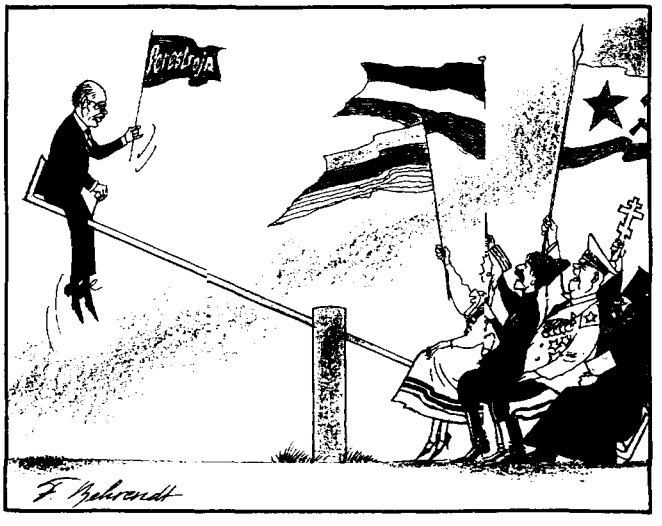
Then came that new dawn when Hitler's *Wehrmacht* invaded his partner's territory, and at last the War against Hitlerism ceased to be "imperialist". First on Reuters' central news-desk, and later on the foreign desk of the old *News Chronicle*, my Communist colleagues were loud and triumphant in praise of "our glorious ally".

It was during that period (1943-48) that two books changed my life: James Burnham's *The Machiavellians: Defenders of Freedom*, which taught me how to think about politics; and Viktor Kravchenko's *I Chose Freedom*, which opened my eyes. Here, at last, was the reality of the Webbs's "new civilisation": the sinister police state where everybody spies on his or her neighbour, who in turn. . . . A terrorised daily reality. Appositely, the word "freedom" occurred in both titles. It was not till much later that other bits of the grand deception fell into place. To mention only one: Arthur Koestler's revelation in *The Invisible Writing* (1954) that he had written his more lurid accounts of Nationalist atrocities during the Spanish Civil War not, as I had supposed, as a conscientious special correspondent of the *News Chronicle*, but as a Comintern agent, under the supervision of the imaginatively inventive Willi Muenzenburg.

FREEDOM BECAME my life motive: the freedom of "the minimum State". The military threat of Nazism and Italian Fascism had been eliminated. The Communist threat was more subtle, more insidious, more long-term. It invaded daily life, affected social *mores*, poisoned minds and institutions. It was not enough to examine the phenomenon, to report it, dissect it, analyse it. It was necessary to fight it.

In so doing, I made a chastening discovery. Criticism and analysis are tolerated—counter-attack is suspect. Action makes enemies; and sorts true friends from false. One is labelled "Right-wing . . . Cold Warrior . . . Extremist . . . McCarthyite . . . and (of course) Fascist", even if one thought one had impeccably moderate credentials.

Although Leninism, once in power, is infinitely more dangerous than Marxism, the deleterious effects of Marxist ideology are far from negligible. It is not simply, as Raymond Aron put it, "the opium of the intellectuals"; it is a pervasive toxin, polluting our schools and universities, our media and publishing, our churches, our political institutions, and not least, our trade unions.



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As arguments collapse and each bastion falls, the gullible and the apologists continue to cling to their remaining illusions. Thus Mrs Glenys Kinnock, whatever she may have thought about the dreadful things exposed in Romania, looked forward with public optimism to the electoral triumph of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua—unable or unwilling to see the connection.

The admirers and adulators of Ceauşescu were to be found on both sides of the great divide. They included Mr Robert Maxwell, and those who advised Her Majesty to invite Ceauşescu to Buckingham Palace and confer an honorary knighthood upon him (withdrawn by the Queen at very nearly the last moment of the tyrant's miserable life).

Is it all over, then—the Cold War lost by those who started it (though not truly won by those at the receiving end)? "World War III" petering out for want of Soviet muscle? "The grand delusion" finally laid to rest?

Alas, far from it. Mealy-mouthed habits die hard. I wish the media would stop calling such régimes as Angola's or Mozambique's "Marxist" when they should give a Communist spade its proper name. I wish BBC Television would not introduce Mr Joe Slovo as an African National Congress leader without mentioning that he also leads the Communist Party of South Africa, and runs the ANC's terrorist wing. I wish respectable politicians would cease to cast their respectability upon the speciously re-styled *Marxism Today*.

I wish that TV and newspaper reporters when (rightly) attacking the early excesses of the Pinochet régime, would make at least a passing reference to the excesses of Allende. I wish that Mr Neil Kinnock, when complaining about the Militant Tendency, would explain that Trotsky, too, was a Communist. And I do wish that some of the many who praise Mikhail Gorbachov's reforms would show some awareness that "the new thinking" in Moscow began as a bold deception exercise, which then spun out of control; and possibly even take him at his word every time he tells us he is a Leninist.

I also wish, along with Paul Johnson, that our still numerous "Marxists" would just pipe down, and even (wonder of wonders) confess that they were wrong all along, instead of trying to kid us that there is a new Communist Party of Great Britain that is Green and Feminist, or changing its name and image as the Italian *PCI* is doing. Or, for that matter, giving Professor Eric Hobsbawm whole pages of space in the first issue of *The Independent on Sunday* (stop press news: Stalin's crimes didn't deserve an apologia).

I wonder whether our media would give such "most favoured" treatment to neo-Fascists or chastened Nazis? On moral grounds, Right-wing Fascism and Left-wing Communism are equivalent; although, on a body count, it is sad to record that Stalin decisively beat Hitler.

Punctuation

London

STALIN & TROTSKY: *There is a story that at the 1937 Congress of the Soviet Communist Party, Stalin announced that he had received a telegram from Trotsky which he intended to read out. It said:*

"You were right I was wrong I should apologise, Trotsky."

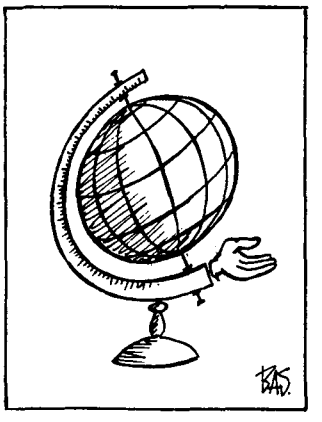
The thunderous applause was interrupted by a Jewish delegate who stunned everyone by asking to see the telegram for himself. When he did, he said: "Comrade Stalin has not read the telegram correctly. What it says is:

"You were *right?* I was *wrong?* I should APOLOGISE**?"**

THE CORRESPONDENT

In "Mittel-Europa"

By Paul Lendvai



VIENNA was one of the best placed, yet in many ways one of the most difficult centres in which to follow, to analyse, and above all to comment critically on events in the Communist world. Except for Berlin, there was perhaps no other place milling with so many secret and half-secret agents, informers and Intelligence officers. For those who had (as I had) grown up under a Communist system, and had witnessed the strangling of young democratic hopes, first as a naive socialist teenager, and later as an adolescent political prisoner (interned as "a Trotskyite" without ever having read, as yet, a line by Lev Davidovich), who had to start a new life after the crushing of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, Vienna was in retrospect rather dangerous.

For myself and some of my friends, living in the immediate vicinity of the totalitarian régimes, about 30 miles from the Iron Curtain, the periods of both confrontation and *détente* also meant personal challenges. How to combine "dialogue" (for example, as Editor of the *Europäische Rundschau* since 1973) with public criticism of the same régimes? How to survive attempts at blackmail, petty corruption and brazen threats, and still remain alert to new trends and to new hopes?

Here in Vienna the collapse of Communism means not only such visible consequences as hundreds of Czech and Hungarian buses crossing the border, hundreds of thousands of Hungarian, Slovak, and Polish visitors descending on the Austrian capital. I have a feeling of deep, personal relief, and great satisfaction.

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"An agent of Radio Free Europe, even of the CIA, a Cold Warrior, an inveterate enemy of Socialism, Peace and Progress." This was an *Izvestia* attack in the autumn of 1983, on me and my collaborators at *ORF*, the Austrian radio and TV network. There was an attempt, aborted almost at the last minute, to arrest me in Bulgaria in 1973 (though I was a press member of the Austrian Foreign Minister's mission). An article published in December 1960 bracketed myself and a friend with "thieves and black marketeers". These were some of the more lurid incidents in a career devoted to "Sovietology". Even my pseudonyms, used in the difficult years of 1957-62 (György Hollo, Arpad Becs, Paul Landy, etc.), did not help because the Hungarian Embassy and the native informers knew them all.

My book *Anti-Semitism Without Jews*, on Communist Eastern Europe, was published in 1971 in New York, but it took 18 more months to find a German publisher because some "anti-anti-Communists", or simply young dupes, managed to sabotage the process.

Our Austrian Communist Party was eliminated from parliament in 1959, and ever since has held only about 1% of the popular vote. Yet its drab daily, *Volksstimme*, financed by print orders from Moscow, had close contacts with young journalists in "radical chic" circles. I felt the full impact when *Volksstimme* attacked me and my journalistic work in a series of slanderous leaders and features. My Vienna TV round-table discussions could be seen in Western Hungary, Slovakia and parts of Moravia in Czechoslovakia, and in Northern Yugoslavia in the republics of Croatia and Slovenia. All this made me an eminently suspect figure in the eyes of quite a few non-Communist, "emotionally Left" intellectuals who confused Austria's military neutrality with ideological or political "neutralism" and fence-sitting.

ARTHUR KOESTLER once said in a rejoinder to a "pink" Babbitt in New York after World War II that the Soviet Union is not *left* but *east* of us. This lingering suspicion that a firm commitment against Communist totalitarianism was somehow "indecent", "not quite right", and never "in", has accompanied me for many years. After all, there were so many respected bourgeois, religiously devout, and what one calls in Vienna "*erzkonservative*" anti-Communists, who nevertheless accepted a string of invitations from the East. They enjoyed free holidays on the Black Sea or in the Carpathians in the guise of attending peace dialogues. Despite their publicly displayed Right-wing bias in domestic policies, they were often liable to be blackmailed for unwise adventures taped or filmed behind "the Curtain".

YET, HAVING SAID all this, is there any point now in "celerating"? Two things combine to create a bitter taste in my mouth. More than 40 years of Communism in Eastern Europe poisoned all of society, depriving people at the same time of bearable civilised standards. Notwithstanding Havel, Dinescu and Michnik, there is a moral desert. For all the differences from country to country, including, above all, the contrasts in the traditions of political culture, there is everywhere the danger of the return of the ghosts of the past: such as rabid nationalism, unbridled chauvinism, anti-Semitism, demagogic populism.

Still, who would have thought that I would be able to present my book on Hungary (published in German in 1986-88 and in English in 1988) in the spring of 1990 in a Hungarian edition in the Budapest Press Club? Or that television, radio and newspapers would carry my candid (perhaps even provocative) remarks not only about the past —but also about the present political élite? The great question for me is whether there will be a return to Hungary's promising recovery of 1945-46 from fascism, or a return to the authoritarian, nationalistic and parochial policies of the 1930s which led to catastrophe.

Right about Everything, Wrong about Nothing?

By Norman Podhoretz

WHO WAS RIGHT? Why, we were, of course. And by "we" I mean the unreconstructed hard-line anti-Communist cold warriors. We were right, in the first place, on the moral question, which in my view always was and still is the central issue. We said—and never stopped saying—that Communism was one of the two great forms of totalitarianism, and as such no less evil than Nazism. We said—and never stopped saying—that Communism had brought nothing but murder, political oppression, cultural starvation, and economic misery to the countries forced to suffer under its rule. We said—and never stopped saying—that no people had ever freely decided to live under Communism, or ever would if given a choice.

On all these points, nowadays so blandly conceded by everyone, as though they had always been as self-evident as the axioms of Pythagoras, we were not only opposed but were sneered at, ridiculed, and defamed. We were told that it was nothing short of blasphemous to see Communism and Nazism as (to borrow a phrase from a rather different context) morally equivalent. We were told that in some respects (economic security, health care, etc.) conditions under Communism were better than life under our own rotten system. And we were told that the Communist régimes did indeed have the support of their peoples.

It is important to stress that we were told these things not only by the Communists themselves but by good liberals

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and social democrats—people who were quick to utter the sincerest cries of "McCarthyism" at the merest suggestion that they might be any more favourably disposed toward Communism than we were; people who in their own eyes differed from us in being more realistic, more flexible, more pluralistic, and (above all) more devoted to peace.

ONE SUCH good liberal, Professor Paul Samuelson, for example, declared in 1976 that it was "a vulgar mistake to think that most people in Eastern Europe are miserable". And his social-democratic colleague, John Kenneth Galbraith (writing, if you can believe it, in 1984) went even further in speaking of the Soviet Union:

> "That the Soviet system has made great material progress in recent years . . . is evident both from the statistics and from the general urban scene. . . One sees it in the appearance of solid well-being of the people on the streets . . . and the general aspect of restaurants, theatres, and shops. . . . Partly, the Russian system succeeds because, in contrast with the Western industrial economies, it makes full use of its manpower."

One could, in the tradition of Paul Hollander's study of the ideology of *Political Pilgrims* (1981), go on and on multiplying such quotations—about China, about Cuba, about Nicaragua—all from commentators who were neither Communists nor even, by their own lights, fellow-travellers. Among my personal favourites is Susan Sontag's description of North Viet Nam under Ho Chi Minh as:

> ". . . a society tremendously overextended ethically . . . incorporation into [which would] greatly improve the lives of most people in the world."

The second question on which we "hard-line anti-Communist cold warriors" were right was the strategic issue. We said—and never stopped saying—that the evil of Communism would metastasise unless Soviet power continued to be met with resistance of every kind from the West, including armed resistance where necessary and feasible. We said—and never stopped saying—that:

> ". . . the Soviet pressure against the free institutions of the Western world is something that can be contained by the adroit and vigilant application of counter-force at a series of constantly shifting geographical and political points, corresponding to the shifts and maneuvers of Soviet policy, but which cannot be charmed or talked out of existence. . . ."

To be sure, the author of those words, written in 1947, did himself in time stop saying them. Indeed, George Kennan joined with the anti-anti-Communist gang—a motley assortment of appeasers, arms-controllers, deniers-of-reality, and Soviet apologists—in denouncing us as mindless fanatics who were leading the world toward a nuclear holocaust. (I once heard a prominent West German intellectual, more centre than Left, declare that the Committee on the Present Danger, the American pressure group, was a greater danger to the world than the Soviet military build-up which it had in the late 1970s been organised to warn against.)

Yet it is the Kennan of 1947, not the Kennan of later years, who has been vindicated by a policy that most surely helped to promote, just as he predicted it would, "tendencies which must eventually find their outlet in either the break-up or the gradual mellowing of Soviet power". Kennan's timing was obviously off: by "eventually" he meant from ten-to-fifteen years, whereas the process turned out to need more than forty. But that was just about the only detail in his analysis that was unsound.

"Miss Clark, find Joe Stalin and tell him Communism is dead."

AM I CLAIMING, then, that we who kept faith with that analysis were right about everything and wrong about nothing? Not quite. Some of us often feared that Western policy was too weak and vacillating to promote the results George Kennan foresaw. At its most extreme, this fear took the form of the belief expressed by Whittaker Chambers who, upon breaking with Communism and casting his lot with the West, "knowingly chose the side of probable defeat". But milder variants of the same species of despair were not uncommon among us.

Some of us, too, overly influenced by Hannah Arendt and other theorists of totalitarianism, tended to think that Communism could never be internally overthrown and that the Soviet Empire would never break up without the spilling of oceans of blood. On this particular issue we were pretty much at one with at least certain schools of anti-anti-Communist persuasion.

But we parted company again on the implications for policy. They (along with many exponents of *Realpolitik* who were, however, less indulgent toward Communism) concluded that it was necessary to "coexist" indefinitely—perhaps even forever—with the Communist system, since the only alternative was a nuclear holocaust. We took the position that, on the contrary, opportunities were arising for a policy which could, with no serious risk of war between the superpowers, hasten the break-up of the Soviet Empire by playing skilfully on (to borrow yet another phrase from a

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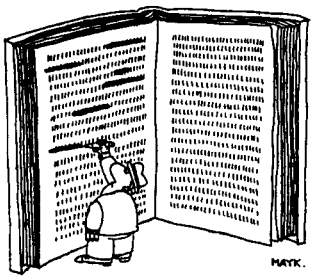
different context) its "internal contradictions". In short, though we judged that even Ronald Reagan was not going far enough in this direction, we applauded his military build-up and his support of the anti-Communist insurgencies in Nicaragua, Afghanistan, and Angola.

On this point we were right as well, though not even we, let alone the anti-anti-Communist gang, ever realised just how right we actually were—or how close to the devoutly-wished consummation we had already come by the time Gorbachov arrived on the scene.

Rediscovering the Truth

By Walter Laqueur



MY MENTORS as far as the October Revolution, Bolshevism and the Soviet Union are concerned were named Pavel Axelrod, Alexander Potresov, and Mark Vishniak. I never met them and they are now quite forgotten. The former two were Mensheviks, and Vishniak was a Socialist Revolutionary. Their articles were written in 1917-21; I read them two decades later; and they still make sense today. My education was completed by the monthly *Sotsialisticheski Vestnik* (1921-57), published by the Mensheviks, and the quarterly *Sovremennie Zapiski* (1920-40), edited by Vishniak. I don't think I missed more than a few issues.

I had been interested in Marxism and other radical thought since my teens; I was equally absorbed in things Russian, and taught myself the language. Had I been born ten or fifteen years earlier I might well have joined the Communist Party or some such group. But my political awakening coincided with high Stalinism, and despite all one's sympathy for the Soviet people, especially during the War years, the massive exposure to the blatant untruths, the dogmatism and sycophancy was bound to antagonise outsiders. I had gone to school in Nazi Germany for five years and this experience, too, should not be belittled as an agent of immunisation. One had to be blind and deaf not to recognise certain striking similarities between the two régimes.

My interest in Russia was as much cultural as political, and I did not think of my Russian studies as a career. My experience was still "indirect". This changed only in the 1950s, when I acted for a number of years as special correspondent of the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*. There were frequent albeit short visits to the Soviet Union. Even earlier I had become the founder and first editor of *Survey*, a quarterly journal specialising in Soviet affairs, which over the years, and under my successor Leo Labedz, published many of the participants in this symposium.

By the mid-1960s my interest in Soviet affairs had waned, and my subsequent work led me to fields distant from that subject. This left little time to keep abreast of the current literature. But there was also a feeling of lack of excitement. I remember a walk in the Caucasus in 1964 or 1965 with my late brother-in-law, a resident of those parts. While we were admiring the spectacular scenery to the left and right of the Military-Grusihian Highway, it suddenly occurred to me that not many fresh impulses were likely to emerge from this country for years to come. Soviet politics and culture were on an even keel, and I found them of little interest.

I did not visit the Soviet Union again for 23 years. When I returned people were talking freely, the journals I had found unreadable in 1965 had suddenly become the most interesting in the world (and, among others, published me). The whole political and cultural landscape had changed out of recognition.

Rereading my comments over the years, I came across some that were plain wrong, and a few that were embarrassing. But, by and large, I think I was on the right side in the great debate of our time. And I also think that Bertrand Russell was right when he wrote, one year before I was born, that:

> ". . . those who stand out against [Bolshevism], not from love of ancient injustice, but in the name of the free spirit of Man, will be the bearers of the seed of Progress, from which when the world gestation is accomplished, new life is born."

But why did the debate last so long, why was the failure of Communism denied for so many years, with so much passion, by so many? Why is there resistance even today to admit what should have been obvious long ago?

I RECALL in October 1953, in the very first number of ENCOUNTER, a review I wrote on a book by the late Isaac Deutscher which appeared a few months after Stalin's death. Deutscher took a far too benign view of the historical role of the tyrant, and he predicted an early return to pristine Leninism in the Soviet Union. I criticised Deutscher for being simple-minded, which he naturally disliked (there was an exchange of letters in ENCOUNTER's third issue). In retrospect, I am not sure whether I characterised him correctly. Deutscher had been a Communist, he knew all there was to know about Stalin and Soviet history. If he still failed to see the obvious, this had to do with a blindness that was caused by ideological blinkers, not by simple-mindedness. The Soviet Union embodied the cherished beliefs of his youth; to admit that the cause had been flawed was to renege on all he had sweetly believed in.

Some abjured the God that Failed; others did not. But an explanation that was true in one specific case was by no means correct in others. Edward Hallett Carr, Deutscher's friend, had never been a member of the Communist Party.

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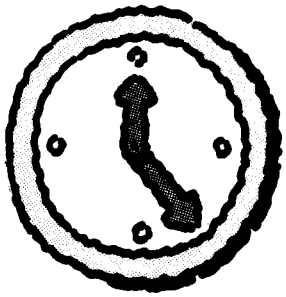
But he believed to the end of his life in the essentially progressive character of Stalin and Bolshevism, because Stalin had been seemingly successful and had made his country a superpower. To explain the Jean-Paul Sartre phenomenon (or, earlier on, the fellow-travelling Henri Barbusse and Lion Feuchtwanger), we ought to look for yet other motives; and once we reach the Western "revisionist" writings of the 1970s the mistakes are rooted in yet other unfathomable layers of the human mind and its capacity for folly.

It was Konrad Adenauer, I believe, who once observed that God had constructed the world most unfairly, inasmuch as there is an unlimited number of possibilities of misinterpreting it; but, usually, only one correct answer. Why should anyone have thought in Brezhnev's time that the Soviet régime was making substantial economic, social, and political progress? Why should Erich Honecker's régime have been regarded, virtually up to the last moment, by a majority of observers in West Germany as a success story, not only effective but also quite popular?

Of Virtues & Vices



I CONFESS TO *having cracked to my editor at Random House in January that taking the Cold War away from me was like taking horses away from Dick Francis. . . . Well, there is no point in denying that the predictably evil behaviour of the Soviet colossus had become something of a magnetic field, useful for assigning priorities to the day's political problems. Although it is indeed time for rejoicing, it is also time to ask ourselves the question: might it have been shorter? By "it" I mean, of course, the period during which the captive nations and their peoples were captive.*

The period is comparable, roughly, to the time between when President Lincoln was shot and Queen Victoria died. The 21-year-old, at the end of World War II, was ready for retirement when the Berlin Wall came down. I profoundly believe, as do most of your readers, that we are responsible for the elongation of the period in question, that more adroit statesmanship and a harder resolution might have brought it sooner to an end.

MOREOVER, **I do not think we can take the satisfaction of having engineered the Communist capitulation. The Soviet Empire fell of its own weight. We managed to stay alive, and for that we can take credit. But we are the people who stood by when it happened to South-east Asia; and who can say with honesty that if the Soviet Union had had its equivalent of North Sea oil, it mightn't have gone on for another 40 years, with Brezhnev-style law and order? Who'd have said them nay?**

The heroes of the Cold War include, if you will permit me, Melvin Lasky. And the great men, Solzhenitsyn, Sakharov, Walesa, have entered Freedom's House of Lords, with eternal tenure. If Whittaker Chambers had lived to see it, he'd have rejoiced as we do; but even as Malcolm Muggeridge continues to bemoan the degeneracy of the West, so would Chambers do this; so do I.

William F. Buckley Jr.

One could think of a variety of explanations for being wrong about Communist régimes. Mirror-imaging; a certain cultural-political parochialism; a projection on to the Soviet Union of models and concepts that had perhaps some use when applied to Western politics and societies but were bound to be misleading in a wholly different context. Western journalists stationed in Communist capitals tended to use comparisons and a vocabulary familiar to Western audiences. Unfortunately, "Constitution . . . Parliament . . . election . . . party . . . leadership", and so on, meant different things in West and East. In some cases the situation in the East was misinterpreted by a new generation of Sovietologists eager to dissociate themselves from their ("Cold War") predecessors. In other instances there was the belief that, since Western political systems were far from perfect, it ill behoved Western observers to criticise other systems ("cultural imperialism", as one American political scientist called it). In any case, scholars had to be objective, and objectivity was believed to be a synonym for equidistance. In the absence of trustworthy sources, they had to rely on the official facts and figures published in the Communist capitals.

But why blame only the Western academics? According to *The World Fact Book* for 1989 (published by the Central Intelligence Agency in Washington), per capita income in East Germany was $12,500—about as much as the United Kingdom, and some 40% higher than Spain and Israel. If this had been true, Honecker's neo-Stalinist Politburo would still be in power.

If of late there has been some self-criticism in the ranks of the Sovietological fraternity, it has concerned its failure to predict Gorbachov, *Glasnost*, and *Perestroika*. But this is hardly relevant, because great events of this kind are *a priori* unpredictable. Gorbachov himself did not know in 1985 how radical his reform policy would in the end become. No one could foresee exactly when and in what circumstances the Communist rulers of Eastern Europe would lose their nerve and their self-confidence. The real issues at stake are the basic misjudgments concerning the character of the régime, the true state of Soviet society, the enormous (and widening) distance between propaganda and reality over the decades. These basic mistakes have not yet been subjected to searching criticism; and it is easy to understand why. But as long as they are not squarely confronted, they will be repeated.

I REGARD THE *Glasnost* revelations as an absolute vindication of the views expressed over many years by informed critics of Communism and the Soviet system. It is the vindication of freedom over tyranny. But it does not prove the superiority of supply-side economics over the advocates of a welfare state, as some seem to believe. It does not prove the superiority of sundry half-baked ideologies, or imply that the Balkanisation of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe is bound to lead to a happy future. Nineteen-ninety marks the end of an epoch; it is also a new beginning, which may bring freedom and a better life to some post-Communist societies, but not to others.

The lessons of more than 70 years of Soviet history have taught us a great many things, many of which were indeed

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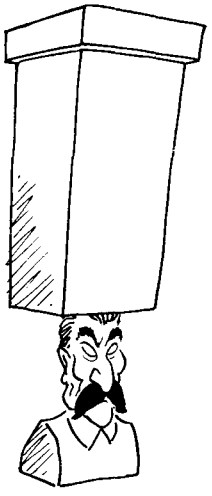
predictable. They have not affected the ideas of truth and justice underlying the process of what Potresov called "the long suffering of the Russian democratic social consciousness". What was bound to go wrong was rooted, as Axelrod wrote, in Lenin's rejection, even before 1905, of the principles of European democratic socialism in favour of the conspirational traditions of the 19th-century Russian intelligentsia. And this tradition was not just limited to Lenin, but was based on the fact that, as Mark Vishniak stated, most of the Russian intelligentsia had little use for either individual rights or democratic institutions: "the Revolution" seemed much more important. It took writers, both East and West, 70 years to rediscover these truths; and in the West there still is some resistance against accepting the obvious.

Oxford Days (with Christopher Hill)

By Julius Gould



IN THE age of Gorbachov, nobody has a good word for Joseph Stalin. Both his legend and his legacy—though not yet those of Lenin—have fallen into disrepute. Truths told "secretly" under Khrushchev are now openly discussed by Soviet writers and politicians. It may not last forever: there is always the possibility of "two steps back. . . ." Yet much has been achieved as serious books, articles, and TV programmes have examined some of the darkest chapters of Soviet history—always, of course, within limits, often with circumspection, but sometimes with refreshing boldness. An outstanding example, at the highest level, of frankness-with-a-purpose came in February 1990. Leading a Soviet Parliamentary Delegation to Britain in February 1990, Vadim Medvedev told his London audience:

> "Stalinism suppressed the democratic trends in the development of our country. Stalin's vision of socialism whose most characteristic hallmarks were total statism of economy and indeed of entire public life, bureaucratisation of the party, suppression of democracy and *glasnost*, and mass repression became reality already in the 1930s. . . ."

Indeed, the linkage of Stalin with repression and bloodshed is now commonplace in the domestic Soviet media.[1] None of this, nearly 40 years after Stalin's death, is now contested in the West—commentators on the Left vie with one another in disowning him. The crowd around *Marxism Today* has no time for him or his epigoni. Another commentator, Mr Robert Harris, tells us (in his *Sunday Times* column of 4 March 1990) that Stalin died four years before Harris was born and that he bitterly resents it when "people like me", presumably Left-wing and professional, are invited to apologise for Brezhnev. . . . The implication is that we should not live in the past: for many younger British writers it often seems indecorous to speak ill of anything prior to, say, "Thatcherism".

Harris should not take it so personally. I do not know what he would have said had he been with us in 1953 (nor, frankly, do I much care). What I do know is that many writers of great intellectual distinction, still happily alive, wrote about Stalin without stressing some salient facts: such as that he had organised terror and murder against peasants, the Red Army, and his own Party comrades; that he had covered up his crimes by falsifying history and subverting Russian scholarship on a mammoth scale; and that Communists and their sympathisers throughout the world were buttressing his structure of mendacity.[2] Others, including many British Establishment figures, played down his brutalities in the service of *Realpolitik*. They may prefer to forget—and to upbraid their critics for "living in the past". Yet such people, unlike Mr Harris, might conceivably have something to regret or for which to apologise. I would not welcome an orgy of self-criticism. We do not have a Stalin-type régime: people of the utmost distinction have the right to get things very wrong and, equally, the right to forget all about it. Likewise, others can choose to jog their memory.

ONE OF THOSE whose memory could be jogged is Christopher Hill, the outstanding academic authority on 17th-century Britain. For many years a Fellow of Balliol College, Oxford (whose Master he was from 1965 to 1978), between 1945 and 1953 Hill made reference to Stalin and his achievements in two books and one article. I shall give special attention to the article. First, a word or two about the books.

Christopher Hill gave a glowing account of the Soviet Union in *Two Commonwealths*, written under the pseudonym of K. E. Holme and published by Harrap in 1945 in its wartime series "The Soviets and Ourselves". This comparison of the British and Soviet systems almost merits a new and revised edition—containing, as it does, such gems as this:

> "The independent peasant proprietor is now almost

[1] See Alec Nove's book *Glasnost in Action* (Unwin Hyman, 1989) for an incisive account of some of this material.

[2] Those who pointed this out were deluged by the customary shower of vitriolic abuse ("evil maniacs", and so on) from Stalin's apologists. This we could take in our stride—as a sort of tribute paid by vice to virtue. More wounding was the reserve displayed by sundry *bien pensants*, with their rooted distrust of "anti-Communism". They were not themselves Communists—far from it—but they wanted a quiet life and "no enemies on the Left". There were many Western scholars in those days who were genuinely concerned for the universal ideals of beauty, goodness, and truth—yet resented reminders that Stalinism was an ugly and evil lie. Many of them retain that disposition to this day.

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extinct in England; and those who till the land rarely own it themselves.

In the U.S.S.R. the process was different. There the shift of population from country to town under the Soviet régime called for a reorganization and improvement of agricultural technique, so that food for the industrial population could be guaranteed."

Next, in 1947—while Stalin was alive and well—Dr Hill produced a work on *Lenin and the Russian Revolution*. The bibliography refers to the opus by "K. E. Holme", and the main text contains many remarkable and still oddly topical passages. For example, Hill anticipates, inadvertently, today's debates over the legacy Stalin drew from Lenin. Hill was praising *both* of them—clearly, for him Lenin and Stalin seemed almost to form a seamless and virtuous web. But it is equally possible to condemn them both, and many of us have done just that. Modern Leftists who cling to Lenin, even going so far as to quote Lenin's famous adverse "testament" on Stalin's character, would find Hill's 1947 eulogy very embarrassing:

"There is thus a logically consistent thread in Bolshevik policy, from the village soviets of 1905 and 1917, the committees of poor peasants in 1918, until that day in 1934 when the Soviet government proclaimed that the kulaks had been 'liquidated as a class'. Whether or not one sympathises with the results of the policy, it is impossible not to be impressed by the solidity of presentation and the persistence which transformed the modest *Development of Capitalism in Russia* of 1899 into Stalin's statement made in November 1936 whilst introducing the new Soviet constitution, that the 'economy of our peasantry is based not on private property but on collective property, which has grown up on the basis of collective labour'."

We also hear that Lenin's views on the persisting nationalities problem in the Russian Empire were "first worked out by 'the wonderful Georgian', as Lenin called him. Indeed, it is impossible to separate the work of the two on this subject" (p.136). Well, well: another seamless web. Small wonder that Hill concluded (p.163): "There is general agreement that in its policy towards the former subject peoples the Soviet régime has won one of its most striking successes." This was a remarkable conclusion, and I do not know how Hill reached it. It is abundantly obvious to everyone today (as it was to many in 1947), that those who were in this state of "general agreement" were just plain wrong. Such "agreement" is certainly neither general nor plentiful among Crimean Tatars, Soviet Jews, Armenians or Azeris, among other smouldering nationalities.

And now for the article. After Stalin's death, Hill paid him a memorial tribute in a long essay called "Stalin and the Science of History" (*Modern Quarterly*, vol. 8, no 4, Autumn 1953). It deserves to be reread in its entirety. We are apprised of Stalin's "insistence on free discussion", and hear also that he was "a very great and penetrating thinker, who on any subject was apt to break through the cobwebs of academic argument to the heart of the matter. . . ." It is almost as if Stalin, had he tried, would—splendid chap—have easily secured an Oxford college post. Not, perish the thought, because he was "on the Left", but because he was a polymath, "on any subject", and he had such unusual promise both as a thinker and as a stimulus to open tutorial discussion. We do not hear that Stalin was also "apt" at ending arguments, academic or otherwise, by arranging a sudden death sentence, or a long journey to a Siberian labour camp.

On the last page of this article, Christopher Hill returns to the topic of the thinking Stalin:

"Stalin was a thinker no less than a man of action. Since 1945, whilst political leaders in the capitalist countries have seen no future for humanity save more and more destructive wars, Stalin has had different preoccupations, a different conception of his responsibilities to his people."

What he had in mind was Stalin's musings (in *Economic Problems of Socialism in the U.S.S.R.*) on reducing the working day to five hours . . . "so that all members of society shall have free time for an all-round education . . . no member of society will be tied to one job all his life. So the divorce between mental and physical labour, which is as old as civilisation itself, will at last be eliminated." And, recalling Engels's view that socialism meant "humanity's leap from the realm of necessity to the realm of freedom", Hill concluded:

"It was Stalin's great happiness that he was able to contribute so largely to the creation of such a society, to know what he was creating, and to see that knowledge spread among the men and women who were joining with him in its creation. Humanity, not only in the U.S.S.R. but in all countries, will always be deeply in his debt."

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[3] In April 1953 the veteran Stalinist R. Palme Dutt was weeping buckets of prose all over his editorial chair at *Labour Monthly*:

"There are moments in history when an instant sums up an age. Such a moment was when the news of the death of Stalin struck a chill in the heart of the overwhelming majority of human beings throughout the world. The days of grief that followed revealed that the whole world—with the exception of a tiny handful of evil maniacs—mourned the loss of Stalin."

This is impure hyperbole. Perhaps one should not be too hard on the wretched Dutt. Weeping for tyrants was his profession as well as a duty.

LET ME SAY just a few things about these historical observations—conceding that Dr Hill, like other Communists at the time,[3] may have been carried away by a sense of personal, if ideological, grief.

(1) Some of them are mere platitudes. To say that "Stalin was a thinker no less than a man of action" is to say something which—in one sense of the word "thinker"—few would wish to contest. Of course Stalin "thought". But the word implies that Stalin's thoughts were (as they had earlier been described) great and penetrating. They could, of course, have also been false (as well, incidentally, as monstrous. . .). Hill—and most Western Communists in 1953—failed to dis-

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cuss Stalin's thoughts in that light. Rather, they believed that they were significant *and true* either about the present or about the future. Stalin's simple suggestions about the five-hour day for Soviet workers were merely banal and, to put it kindly, hard to reconcile with the facts about what actually was happening and went on to happen in the Soviet Union. Certainly no Russian in the Gorbachov era claims that the Soviet Empire has become a Tawneyesque civilisation with a priority concern for adult education after a five-hour working day.

(2) Even if Stalin did have such great "thoughts", it was tendentious to contrast them with the supposed preoccupation of "political leaders in the capitalist countries". Where was the evidence that such leaders saw "no future for humanity save more and more destructive wars"? None was provided for this large assertion: the reader is expected to take Dr Hill's word for it. I do not claim that Hill did not believe what he wrote. But, as I am sure he would agree, an historian's beliefs are no substitute for evidence.

(3) As for his remark about "Stalin's great happiness", my first reaction is to ask how Dr Hill knew, or could conceivably have known, about Stalin's happiness or its greatness. If we are to accept that Dr Hill was an authority on comparative happiness, which I am reluctant to do, we might expect him also to have known about other sources of Stalin's "happiness"—for example, his pleasure in supervising terror, telling lies, or being anti-Semitic. . . . But Hill makes no mention of such matters, and we must conclude that his insights into Stalin's "happiness" were somewhat partial and arbitrary.

(4) The final statement about humanity's debt to the old tyrant was ludicrous when it was written, and is equally preposterous today. Dr Hill was not a successful prophet.

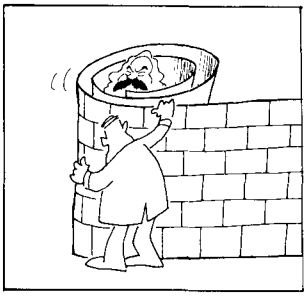
Such difficulties may have arisen because on this occasion Dr Hill stood back from the use of customary historical standards. He also relied too heavily on Soviet sources. He might reflect on the wisdom of another Marxist historian, Eric Hobsbawm—unlike Hill, *still* a Communist. Not so long ago, in an interview with *The Guardian*, Hobsbawm said that he had not written directly on Russian history because what the Soviet sources had to say had been "horseshit". Not very elegant—but good to hear at last from such a quarter. . . .

I WILL END on a personal but relevant note. During and just after the War, I spent four exciting and instructive years at Balliol College, Oxford, of which I remain a loyal scholar. Some 30 years later this experience had a bizarre sequel. One of my younger colleagues had visited Oxford and came back with a curious fiction, picked up from some malicious circuit of gossip. Allegedly, I had acted as an informer for the security services during my post-War period at Oxford. . . . I rapidly and politely told him that this was a tissue of disinformation—that my War service had indeed been at what is now known as GCHQ but that at no time in the relevant years at Oxford after 1946 had I had any approach from—let alone contact with—any security service whatever. After he had left my study, something suddenly crossed my mind. . . .

There had, after all, been one very public, absurd, yet indirect "approach". One afternoon in my first year back at Balliol, around 1947, a mimeographed appeal appeared on the Junior Common Room notice board. It emanated, as I recall, from Magdalen College, and proposed an Oxford association of former British Intelligence personnel: "Your College Representative is Mr J. E. C. Hill." A group of us looked at this in disbelief—and then roared with laughter. I do not know whether "the old boys" ever met in such an association. Naturally enough, I went nowhere near it.

Moment of Truth

By Leopold Labedz



IT IS almost three-quarters of a century since Russia's October Revolution. During this time there have been seven leaders in the Soviet Union, five of them in the post-Stalin era. Official policies and even, recently, Party legitimacy may well have been undermined through half-hearted admissions of crimes ("mistakes") and denunciations of Stalin and some of his henchmen. But two things have remained unchanged: the self-interest of the Soviet *nomenklatura*, and the posture of the Western "progressive" intelligentsia towards the Soviet Union.

In the context of Soviet history, there is hardly any point in asking the question "Who was right and who was wrong?" Gorbachov himself has provided an official answer to that in his repudiation of the Soviet past as well as its present legacy. Yet the basic attitude of the Western progressives has not really changed. Just as they supported Stalin's policies *vis-à-vis* the West,[1] refusing to find fault with him while blaming their own governments and society for being less than ideal, so now they manifest their uncritical attitude in their euphoria about Mikhail Sergeyevich and, as is their wont, take his side about everything (even on such issues as the Soviet refusal to accept the Baltic states' proclamations of independence).

They can scarcely write now about Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia in the way the fellow-travellers in the West did in the 1930s. Here, for instance, is what Anna Louise Strong wrote in 1942 about Stalin's forcible incorporation of the Baltic states into the Soviet Union:

[1] Cf., for instance, G. D. H. Cole saying, in his *Europe, Russian, and the Future* (1942), that it is "much better to be ruled by Stalin than by a pack of half-witted and half-hearted Social-democrats. . . ."

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> "I had the tremendous luck to arrive in Lithuania in July 1940, just after the Red Army marched in. I stopped in the capital, Kaunas, on my way to Moscow, expecting to spend a day. The day grew to a week, the week to a month . . . never in any land—in Spain, in Russia, or in China—have I seen a whole people come alive. Day and night, for weeks, singing did not cease in the streets of Kaunas. A sovereign state was changing from capitalism to socialism quite constitutionally without destruction of life or property."[2]

Half-a-century later, the West is not facing the Nazi menace as it did then. Mrs Thatcher and President Bush may wax lyrical about "the revolution in Eastern Europe"; yet when it comes to deeds, both of them have put pressure on Landsbergis to capitulate to Gorbachov. Secretary of State Baker even assured Shevardnadze that there would be no US economic sanctions for Soviet action in Lithuania. For good measure, the British Foreign Secretary, Douglas Hurd, on TV, spitefully dismissed the Lithuanians as not being really worthy of diplomatic consideration. As usual (it was the same with Czechoslovakia in 1938), the Western sense of guilt blackens the victim rather than the persecutor.

There is an uncanny resemblance between editorials today and those appearing in the British press in 1938, and there is a similar fear and unease among the public—although this time "the risk of war" cannot be used as a justification.

So the really interesting question is not "Who was right and who was wrong?" This is obvious. But why it is that those who were always wrong continue ("in good conscience") to exhibit the same mind-set as their predecessors, while being even more successful in capturing "the commanding moral heights" and in influencing public opinion through the media?

People who condemned Stalin's crimes before Khrushchev and Gorbachov granted official permission to do so are still dismissed as "Cold Warriors". We are still beyond the pale to the *bien pensants*. I remember a letter to the Editor of Encounter in the 1950s upbraiding me for being "uncivilised" in making a critical remark about Stalin's crimes in my monthly column "From the Other Shore". I wonder what its author would think now?

If, however, there is less evidence today of the claims to "moral superiority" on the part of those who kept finding excuses for the Gulag, their animosity towards those who did have the nerve to speak the truth about those issues, long before they themselves reluctantly admitted it, is even more intense. There is apparently nothing more painful than facing the *unbewältigte Vergangenheit*, a past that has not been overcome. The contrast between Soviet scepticism and Western enthusiasm about *perestroika* could not be more telling. This explains, incidentally, the irony (which Zbigniew Brzezinski rightly stresses) of the fact that the concept "totalitarian" is now constantly used in Soviet and East European publications (including official ones), whereas it is assiduously eschewed by the Western media. In short, those who have had experience of the phenomenon use the word, and those who have not (and do not wish to know about it) avoid it.

The history of progressive rationalisations on this topic should provide a lesson for today as well as for the future. In the beginning, the Bolshevik *coup d'état*, the capturing of the Revolution by Lenin, was greeted by Western sympathisers as "the storming of heaven". The terror of Lenin's *Cheka* was explained away as the inevitable concomitant of the revolutionary upheaval. Later, when terror became further institutionalised and doctrinally enshrined under Stalin, it was accepted by fellow-travellers as a necessary cost of "the building of socialism" ("you can't make an omelette without breaking eggs"). After Khrushchev's "Secret" speech, the crimes were partially admitted, but dismissed as mere errors of the past, with no relevance to the present. The future was, as usual, still radiant.

Under Gorbachov, we have finally come to a point where not only the past but also the present have been defined as being in need of fundamental change—in need of *perestroika*. These days, though, it is not just the category of pro-Communist sympathisers who are supporting Gorbachov, but the full range of Western Establishments who fervently pray that he will remain in power. The possibility of his downfall is presented as the greatest catastrophe that could happen to the West. They hope that by providing him with political and financial support, this can be avoided. However, whether he will survive or not surely depends more on internal developments than on Western diplomacy. In any case, Gorbachov has not abandoned traditional Russian and Soviet imperial aspirations, as he has made abundantly clear in his speeches and policies. In his book *Perestroika* (1987), the mask slips: his real intentions are inadvertently betrayed by his high-handed remark that he could "no longer accept in the old way the multi-coloured, patchwork quilt-like political map of Europe". One can easily imagine what would happen to the independent states of Europe if Gorbachov had his way in "our common European home". One has only to look at Armenia and Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan (not to mention the Baltic states) to realise what kind of home it would be.

A much more realistic comment on the subject comes from Marek Ciesielczyk , a Poznan journalist (in the Polish *samizdat*) who summed up the problem of assessing "who was right and who was wrong" as follows:

> "Would it be acceptable in Germany today if post-War de-Nazification was conducted by the close collaborators of Hitler? Probably not. Yet the most important political figures in the USSR after Stalin's death had all been Stalin's faithful followers."

In sharp contrast to these reflections based on experience come the comments of some Western journalists. One of these is Alexander Cockburn (the son of Claud Cockburn, who was the butt of Orwell's criticism in *Homage to Catalonia*). Alexander Cockburn, who now lives in the USA, has recently taken up the issue of the total number of Stalin's victims in *The Village Voice* and *The Nation*. Basing

[2] Anna Louise Strong, *The Soviets Expected It* (Dial Press, New York, 1942), p. 127.

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his argument on ideological "estimates" by Sheila Fitzpatrick still seeking to whitewash Stalin in the West, he states that the total number ranges "only" between 3½ and 8 million. Another journalist, supporting Cockburn, argued in *The Guardian* (10 March 1990):

> ". . . by minimising the quantitative gulf between Hitler and Stalin killings, it becomes easier to skate over the qualitative uniqueness of the Nazi genocide and war."

One month later, both *Pravda* and *Izvestia* officially indicated that the figure for Stalin's victims was close to 50 million, not including the war dead.

I am glad to have lived until this moment of truth. In this *hora de verdad* there really can no longer be any doubt about who was right and who was wrong.

Behind the Façade

By Anthony Hartley

NOW THAT it is all over and Soviet Communism is fading into a mere backdrop of Europe's 20th-century drama, I can remember different stages in my own attitude towards it. While I was still at Oxford, I read Nicholas Berdyaev's *The Origins of Russian Communism*, a first encounter with the subject which seemed to me then (and still seems now) a plausible explanation, in terms of Russian thought and history, of what had gone on in the Soviet Union after the Revolution. Stalin had his predecessors in Ivan the Terrible and Peter the Great—the Procurator of the Holy Synod provided an example of the ruthless suppression of intellectual initiatives from which Zhdanov might have taken tips. Friends, more in tune with the spirit of the age, offered to lend me the Webbs's *Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation* (I forget if that edition had the famous question-mark or not!) or E. H. Carr's *History of Soviet Russia*; but I could not get on with them. Both were so uncritical—Carr, for instance, simply accepting statements in Soviet documents without any of the scepticism which he would have applied to, say, material from the British Foreign Office. Moreover, it seemed particularly unlikely that, if Utopia were to be embodied in some real society, this chosen vessel would be Russia—here perhaps an aboriginal English nationalism was at work, but, all the same, it was a useful counter to the intellectual romanticism which formulated its political dreams in terms of images from Sergei Eisenstein.[1]

If the characteristics of Soviet Communism were specifically Russian, then it followed that its ecumenical claims must be rejected. Nor were those claims made any more credible by the dreariness of Marxist language and the poverty of Communist culture—all those statues of heroic workers and poems in honour of "Great Leaders". However, unattractive though Soviet Communism might be, it succeeded in one of its aims: it was frightening. The essence of that fear was this: that there might be people who would believe in its dingy creed for ever; that children brought up in it might come to accept its atrocities and petty persecutions as normal, and even meritorious, actions; that its maimed view of life might be handed down from fervent generation to generation. It was this apprehension that filled Orwell's *1984*—the fear that modern techniques of tyranny would mould history into their accomplice.

Fortunately, this gloom was not justified; there was more freedom around in 1984 than in 1948. After Khrushchev's 20th Congress speech and the Hungarian uprising, one could continue to dislike Communism—indeed, that dislike was intensified as the nature of its deeds became clearer—but there was no longer any reason to fear it. After 1956 it was obvious that Marxism-Leninism was, in some sense, going to lose. When I travelled in Eastern Europe in the late 1950s, it was striking how inefficient in everything, including thought control, these régimes were. Economic stagnation went hand in hand with petty spite in the exercise of power.

The Polish poet Adam Wazyk told me how a Party committee had attacked him for saying that there was prostitution in the new steel town of Nova Huta. They claimed there was none. "It was then", he said, "that I realised we were governed by fools." Life in the East became a series of encounters with, and evasions of, a lumpen-bureaucracy. Perhaps Bruce Chatwin's *Utz* (1988) is the best imaginative account of what it is like to live in a totalitarian state.

FROM THE EARLY 1950s, therefore, it became apparent to those who were disposed to use their eyes that the Soviet régime was not only unpleasant for its own citizens, but also so decrepit that, even in Communist terms, it was failing to deliver what had been promised. Why then did so many people refuse to perceive this? "The true believer" in Communism, of course, was a special case. His views were quite largely held for the satisfaction they afforded his own psyche rather than for their correspondence with reality. It is difficult and painful to break away from a long-held credo. It is far easier to turn one's back on what is going on in that far-off country, the Soviet Union, and concentrate on the historical inevitability of the forward march of the proletariat. If history is on your side, moving towards a beneficent and predestined end, there is no need to enquire too closely about its divergences from that ordained path. It will get there in the end, despite "historical accidents".

But what of the others? What of those, for instance, who

[1] As time went on, and local Communists or fellow-travellers had to scrape the bottom of the barrel in order to find some régime to admire, this point became glaringly obvious. For if it was foolish to pin one's faith to what was going on in Russia, it was merely ludicrous to regard countries like Albania or Nicaragua as models of ideological purity. But Western Communism had little sense of the ridiculous—the *condottieri* of the 1920s and '30s apart.

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insisted, up to and beyond December 1989, that a society had been created in East Germany that was "different" from that of the Federal Republic (it was certainly that!) and that the two Germanies had no wish to unite? Well, there are some who simply like power and order and are offended by the untidy aspects of a consumer society. Kim Philby, I suppose, was one of them; he thought the Soviet Union superior because of the importance it attached to its Intelligence Services. E. H. Carr, too, simply attached himself to any historical force he thought likely to succeed. He preferred to bet on certainties, and, once the bet was down, it was impossible to believe that the horse was spavined. At a time when the British political class appeared to be losing its hold on power, it was some sort of a solution, though a bizarre one, to transfer allegiance to a foreign élite, devoted to a new imperial mission.

Some error too must be set down to the intellectual habits of liberal-minded men, to the way in which they approached evidence. The attempt to strike a balance between two conflicting versions of the facts led to some strange results when the effects of propaganda were ignored. Two contradictory propositions—"The Soviet economy is going through a period of expansion" and "The Soviet economy is undergoing a catastrophe"—could lead to what seemed the reasonable conclusion: "The Soviet economy is not doing as badly as the pessimists say, though its condition leaves much to be desired." Yet the balance struck is not a true one, if the first statement is simply an invention of propaganda without any independent validity. Time and again the testimony of men like Krivitsky or Kravchenko was dismissed as "paranoiac" or "exaggerated". But it was they who were telling the truth, and their detractors who were swayed by propaganda, which succeeded in changing the terms of the debate.

THANK HEAVEN that this type of discussion is now no longer necessary. We need waste no more time in enumerating the defects of Marxist sociology or pointing out the obvious about the state of the Soviet Union. The condition of Russia can be analysed as though it were an ordinary subject; there is no longer a sense of treading on someone's hallowed ground. Historians and political analysts have passed in two or three years from having too few facts about political life in Russia to having far too many. So much the better for them.

So, in one sense, "the anti-Communists" were right about the Soviet Union. Or were they? For, after 1960, anti-Communism had its own internal contradictions. On the one hand, anti-Communists, among whom I would number myself, considered the Soviet Union a run-down society, falling further behind the West every year in social and economic terms and bound for a crisis of its nationalities at home and its client states in Eastern Europe.[2] On the other, they continued to fear Russian power and its ability to expand through military aggression or subversion. In fact, world-wide Soviet power could not effectively be based on a stagnant society and economy. But it was easier to take note of Leonid Brezhnev's cruiser diplomacy in the Indian Ocean than to become aware of the Soviet Union's rapid domestic decline.

This failure to align their view of the dangers of Russian expansion with an analysis of the failure of Soviet society often led anti-Communists to express their fears in language that seemed extreme and sometimes paranoiac. They paid insufficient attention to the factors constraining the Soviet Union, and this did nothing for their credibility, particularly among the young, and seemed to justify scornful references to "cold warriors". A style of polemic that had been appropriate in years when Communism was still taken seriously as an ideology came later on to sound like nagging. And there is nothing like nagging to turn the listener off.

Yet the anti-Communists were dead right about the nature of the Soviet régime. It was a totalitarian tyranny stewing in the juice of its own decaying ideas. It was based on power, and up to quite recently was the seat of ecumenical pretensions which have only now been abandoned by Mikhail Gorbachov. Its economy was a disaster, its society discontented and impoverished. Behind the uniforms, the parades and the nuclear weapons, it was far weaker than it seemed. It was essential to insist on these truths as long as the true believers and the power worshippers were still present in Western societies and the Third World. In the late 1940s and early 1950s the reality of Soviet Communism—even of its Stalinist aberrations—had to be forced on many people who, though they did not much like their local Communists, felt that they had better reinsure with them. In France, for instance, men like David Rousset and Raymond Aron were subjected to a kind of intellectual terrorism when they tried to tell the truth about Stalin's labour camps. That these battles should be won in Western Europe was a necessary condition of the liberation now going on in the East—yes, and of the awakening of political life in Russia itself.[3]

Perhaps now we can view the story of Russian Communism as an appalling historical tragedy—a drama made to the scale of Russia itself—which revealed both the brutality of which men are capable—*homo homini lupus*—and the fortitude with which they can survive it.

(A concluding instalment of this Symposium will be published in the next ENCOUNTER.*)*

[2] The possible break-up of the Soviet Union was envisaged with particular clarity by Hélène Carrère d'Encausse in her book *L'empire éclaté: la révolte des nations en l'URSS* (Paris, 1978).

[3] In this connection I should like to pay tribute to the work of my friend Robert Conquest. His book *The Great Terror* (1968) had an enormous influence in revealing, with a massive assembly of facts, what went on under Stalin. That impact extended to the Soviet Union itself, where his books are now being published. The reaction there and the further evidence now being (literally) unearthed by Russian investigators are a sufficient answer to American "revisionist" historians who have criticised his account of the Purges as exaggerated.

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Peter Gilmour

Foods from the North

DESCENDING from the jumbo, Lawrence Fielding realised that he was glad, after all, to be here, in this famous old city of the Far East (airborne, he had simply wanted to be at home). It had been three years since his last visit, and he hadn't imagined he would be required to make another one. He hadn't thought there would be any need, for the sales figures he was given each month—and which he always studied anxiously, alone in his office—showed that the valves which his company, Wyatt and Wishart Ltd, made had been selling well and steadily. It had been a captive market, but his job was to open up new markets. With the rise of a rival firm in West Germany, however, there were doubts that their customers in the Far East would continue to favour them, or to favour them wholeheartedly. So it had become necessary for Lawrence to return to the city which in his younger and more confident days—his jaunty days, as he sometimes thought of them—he had especially loved.

Would it disappoint him? Would he find that here also there were shadows? As, last week in Preston, there had been shadows, shadows cast by God knew what. As, two weeks before that, in Aberdeen, there had been shadows—shadows which had appeared to spread and deepen, to breed almost, as he considered them. All he'd been able to think, seeking to understand the matter, was that the world was breaking down somehow—had been tampered with, abused—and that he, Lawrence Fielding, apparently alone among his colleagues and contemporaries, had come to sense it.

The slow taxi ride from the airport to his hotel (L'Excelsior Oriental—he had always stayed there) reassured him. These were the streets he remembered: the tiny shops, so brightly painted, so colourful, their owners as often outside, hawking for business, as inside, serving; the stalls and then suddenly the markets; the huge gleeful adverts for universal favourites like Coke or whisky; the merriment and the squalor (so often appearing to go together, strange twins); the incomprehensible street signs; the carts pulled by men or oxen, the barrows by men or boys; the astonishing narrowness of the streets; the extraordinary din; the broad, slow flowing river with its many bridges; the prostitutes soliciting by poise, by stillness, not by smiles or gestures; the beggars with matted hair and discoloured gums; the sudden smells, of seafood, vegetables, petrol and diesel, ordure, refuse; the groups of girls, arms linked, laughing; the street-corner men—as in some endless ritual of anticipation—combing their hair and looking into the distance; the occasional limousines, with their darkened windows and insistent horns, even the unhurried elderly giving way before them; the cars and trams islanded by crowds at the crossroads; the skinny, scavenging dogs.

Was it because, whenever he had come here, he had been in the habit of taking taxis, almost never walking or going by public transport, that he got so excited by the life of the streets? Because he had always done good business, in a cordial atmosphere, that he believed that, for all the apparent chaos, the city made sense, could be threaded, had an agreeable complexity, few dark corners?

Alighting at the hotel, Lawrence stood still for a moment, looking about him. He was standing, in fact, by a fountain whose waters, issuing from a bowl about fifteen feet up in a lovely measured cascade, briefly suggested the crest of L'Excelsior Oriental. There was much less noise here, because the hotel and its fountain were in a little square, back from the main street. Comparatively, there was silence, an approach to it at least, and, surrendering to this, suddenly weary, Lawrence sat down on one of the fountain's marble seats. His wife had once told him that because of his heavy build and his joviality he was more like a clown than a wrestler; but now in his weariness he felt merely heavy—heavy and a little old. He hitched up his trousers so that they wouldn't crush, remembering the moments of simple happiness he had had here, by the fountain, in the near silence: after dinner, smoking, alone or with fellow guests. He wondered if it would happen tonight (it was the sort of day—a clear sky, steady heat—which, becoming evening, invited people to sit by pools, fountains), for it wasn't happening now. Not that he was unhappy exactly: it was just that he had a slightly dismayed sense of being short of his former happiness here, of being denied composure.

Then he became aware of being watched. Looking up, he saw the head porter of L'Excelsior Oriental

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(Sam, he had always been called) regarding him as if he thought there might be something wrong. He hadn't heard him approach, and now he wasn't aware of him as surely as he felt he ought to have been. He stood up, putting out his hand, as if he hoped that touch would give him more assurance of Sam's presence than sight had done.

"Mr Feedlie", Sam was saying, "Mr Feedlie."

"Sam!" Lawrence said, smiling at the pronunciation of his name. "Long time no see. How are you?"

"Long time no see you too. Your suitcase now."

They were about the same age, Lawrence supposed, around fifty, and the same height, an inch or two over five feet, but as they walked slowly away from the fountain he was aware of his bulkiness, of his legs seeming to come down outwards from his body, as if thrust there by his heavy thighs. By contrast, Sam seemed to him catlike—in spite of the suitcase, strong and simple in his movements.

SMILING steadily, as at some image of service (tarnished, perhaps, but still held to, still respected), Sam took them up to the tenth floor, the purring of the lift broken only by clicks when floors were passed. It seemed to Lawrence that he had been subdued by the years, that his cheeks were thinner, his eyes further back in his head (his skull, as Lawrence thought of it). Certainly he spoke less. Had some disagreeable guest made it clear that his English was too poor to venture unless it was absolutely necessary? Or had he (might this be true of himself also, Lawrence wondered) reached that age when words appeared to dance on the surface of experience like flies on water, decorative, perhaps, but nothing more?

"Thank you, Sam", Lawrence said, tipping him generously. "Thank you very much."

"Anything I can do for you, Mr Feedlie. Anything."

"Don't worry, I'll ring. And now, after I've had a wash, I think I'll sit and watch the river. Why not with a Scotch?"

"A Scotch, yes. A minute shall be."

"A double."

"A double, certainly, yes."

From his room on the tenth floor (hadn't he been in it before, when he was much younger?), Lawrence could see a considerable stretch of river. It came on the scene, flowing strongly, from behind a block of flats and went on for some thirty yards before disappearing behind one of the highest buildings—white, soaring, with red minarets and a golden dome—in this quarter of the city. He had always had the fancy that it flowed very slowly here, as if, mindful that it was open to view, to consideration, its purpose was to show what rivers really were.

Here, a large whisky in his hand, his jacket off and tie loosened, Lawrence would sit and watch the river until dinner-time—would sit and watch it until it appeared almost to have stopped flowing.

He arrived at the tall, glass-fronted building of his customer, Chan and Brown Ltd, Shipbuilders, just after nine the next morning. Another slow taxi ride, as slow as the one the day before, but not leaving him as settled, today, as taxi rides usually did. He was aware of his weight and a certain breathlessness as, through the steamy morning (the sounds of the city loud about him), he mounted the steps to the huge swing-doors. (Now in green, now in yellow, now in red, the name Chan and Brown Ltd winked endlessly, night and day.) And he was having difficulty with his briefcase. First he held it in one hand, then in the other, then he twirled it, then bore it in both hands, like a tray. (It wasn't, he suspected, because his palms were sweating that it was happening: it was because it was happening that his palms were sweating.) Once through the swing-doors he was obliged to place it—his initials, L.D.F., in gold on the front—on a glass table and attend to himself as best he could. First he wiped his hands and forehead with his handkerchief, then he loosened his tie and dabbed at his neck, and then, gently, he tightened his tie again, chin raised. (Little rituals of refreshment—part ablutions really—developed over his years as a traveller, but less effective now, he had to admit, than they had been.)

A SIMPLE task: to persuade Chan and Brown Ltd to persevere with the valves they knew—and should have learned to trust—rather than change to the West German valves they didn't know. Truly a simple task. Much easier than it had been eleven years ago, when they were struggling to break into the market. Easier, too, than the task of their West German rival. (Lawrence recognised that there might be West German salesmen in the building this morning.) Dabbing his face again, he reminded himself that their valves had a long and impressive record: cars, lifts, bulldozers, helicopters, aircraft, submarines, warships—all had been successfully served by them. Any faults had been quickly ironed out, remedied. Only four fatal accidents, but the compensation generous. These and other facts (for the employees of Wyatt and Wishart, articles of faith) he went over in his mind as he waited in the large marble-floored entrance hall, with its glass tables—each bearing a pot plant—and its phone booths, its constantly opening and closing lifts, its huge whirring fans, its secretaries with their bits of paper entering now from the left, now from the right, its security men with their dark suits, dark glasses and studied watchfulness. Far from reassuring him, however, the check-list unsettled him. It was as if, in some boardroom on the third or fourth floor, he was about to discover that the successes of Wyatt and Wishart had been overtaken by events which rendered them negligible; or that the faith and rhetoric of him and his colleagues wasn't up to exploiting them any more; or that, out of a dreadful familiarity with the successes, he had lost the art of doing so; or that, while they

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were indeed impressive, persuasive, it was only as part of a game (a game, moreover, which he was possibly sick of playing).

THE MEETING was long but not particularly difficult. Chan and Brown listened to him respectfully (the respect he might have said was his due), to a man laughed at his jokes (a united company), and presented their reservations as if, had he wanted to, Lawrence could have made them ashamed of them. At one o'clock exactly, lunch—sandwiches, fruit, coffee—was wheeled in on trolleys by smiling waitresses. The room grew hot with cigarette smoke, but—as if the atmosphere went with the deal—no window was opened.

At last, in mid-afternoon, it was conceded that the West German valve had not been proved better; but they had to keep an open mind. They knew Lawrence would appreciate that. Open minds led to good markets. Wasn't that so? Until the West German valve was proved better, therefore—and, of course, this might never happen (probably never would happen)—the order with Wyatt and Wishart would stand more or less as it had done. "More or less": in the past Lawrence (jovially aggressive, aggressively jovial) would have pounced on such a phrase, shaken it until it was replaced by a definite assurance—an assurance plus an apology, even. But now he let it go. What was one valve more or less? A dozen here or there? Wasn't it generous as well as cunning to allow yourself to be dictated to on small points? "More or less": the deeper truth was that he hardly heard the phrase. The snap of his briefcase, in his head if not in the boardroom, drowned it out.

Would he have felt less empty if he had had to fight more? (It had been too easy, perhaps; there hadn't really been any danger. In the hope of getting better terms, Chan and Brown had simply been trying to give them a fright.) And would he have felt more inclined to do what he had been invited to do—go with his hosts to one of the night-spots they favoured—if the meeting had been difficult and occasionally bitter (nothing like a meal for drowning differences)? (Once, he had allowed himself to be taken to one of these places, but he had drawn the line at what his hosts saw as coming after dinner—an hour or two with the hostesses.) As it was, all he wanted to do was go back to the hotel and sit by the window of his room with a double Scotch (brought to him by Sam on one of the hotel's small silver trays), there to watch the river until the light failed. He disengaged himself, therefore, as politely as he could, pleading tiredness, weakness; but then had to submit to quarter of an hour of solicitude (one of Chan and Brown's rest-rooms? a doctor even?), to repeated handshakes and expressions of thanks and goodwill, and, finally, to being led to his taxi by three of Chan and Brown's directors. Through the back window he waved to them, hoping they weren't offended, but not really caring, he realised, if they were. He waved to them none the less until they were out of sight, and then imagined them—even though they couldn't see him and were perhaps glad he'd gone—waving also, waving in unison.

For some reason he felt that the taxi was going extremely slowly, but it was a fact that now and then it overtook other vehicles, so he didn't think it could really be so. Another impression he had was that an unusually large number of pedestrians laid hands on it at traffic-lights, as if it was some sort of pet, or museum piece. Many seemed to grin in at him, showing off their colourful clothes, their familiarity with the streets, and he thought how similar their grins were, if you came to think of it (or was this generalising a sign of fatigue?), to those of the businessmen he'd been dealing with that day. It was a grin, he suddenly felt, which told you nothing—absolutely nothing. It was as impenetrable as the street signs. And he recalled with astonishment that once (looking for presents for his wife and two daughters) he'd given himself up to these streets, these grins, as if nothing but happy discoveries would follow.

Someone banged then on the bonnet of the taxi and scowled. The taxi driver leant out of his window and spat. The pedestrian brandished his fist; the taxi driver spat again.

Here (a crowded square in the poor quarter), just when he'd begun to think, like some foolish tourist, that the grin was ubiquitous, emblematic of the city, a kind of pervasive rictus, was a hole in it. A hole in the grin of the city. (A hole through which, if he had the patience, the courage, he might bring himself to look one day? Unless it didn't work that way, of course; unless these holes claimed you, forced you to use them.)

Arriving at L'Excelsior Oriental, he told Sam that he would rest until dinner-time.

"And a double Scotch, Sam, please."

"Yes, Mr Feedlie. Look tired."

"I am."

IT WAS A beautiful evening, promising a splendid sunset. Jacket off, tie loosened, Lawrence sat in an armchair by the window—a coolness coming through the warmth now—telling himself that he might have to have a second Scotch, this evening, possibly even a third. His attention was wholly on the river, sparkling as it flowed steadily—east to west—across his view. Now and then a low barge passed, with vivid sails, and now and then, steered by a stooped standing figure, a skiff. Then there would be moments of pure river—unadulterated flow, flow as from the beginnings of time. These were the moments he loved best. An hour of them, he believed, and he would be all right, his palms no longer sticky about the whisky glass, his stomach ready for dinner (himself and his soul, then, for sleep).

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With the beginning of sunset, the river ceased to sparkle. A violet clarity was upon it now, so that it seemed already a river of night. It became one of Lawrence's fancies that the buildings which cut it off on left and right were the frames of an eternally moving picture, and that he alone in all the world was watching it. Was it, he wondered, the only part of the city to which he gave such attention because it wasn't really a part of it at all—just something which passed through, a sublime artery, beginning and ending everywhere and nowhere?

THE VIOLET clarity lasted for about ten minutes, giving way to a strange green light. More like dawn light, Lawrence thought—some northern winter dawn—than dusk. And what now, suffused by this green light, were these shapes that were floating by? Six or seven together, then a pause; then two, then another pause; then a dozen or so. Lawrence's first thought was that they were abandoned dinghies, his second that they were sacks, sacks swollen and bloated on account of their contents. But would dinghies or sacks pass by with quite such sombre stateliness? And would they, by the banks, where the currents were confused, spin and toss in quite this way before finding their way out into the middle again? And would either appear to be engaged, now and then, in what looked to Lawrence like an involuntary crawl?

His suspicion grew (why was he not wholly surprised to be having it?) that it was bodies he was seeing, not dinghies or sacks, bodies so peculiarly buoyed up that they might float on through other cities also, through towns and villages, across plains even and into other lands. Here, however, in this famous old city in which again he was briefly resident, he did the only thing he could think of doing: he rang room service and asked for a double Scotch—also if some binoculars could be found, he wanted to admire the sunset.

He returned to the window then, watching the river as if, one day, he might be called upon to give an accurate account of what he was seeing. And what he seemed to be seeing, at this moment, was a mass of bodies in the middle of the river, stuck there, revolving slowly, very slowly, none able to break free and show the way. If this was so, if this was truly what it was, surely it should be classed as a public threat—one so grave, so terrible, as to require municipal intervention? Surely here, as at home, they had river police, equipped for all emergencies? (It would only take one or two prods with a long pole, Lawrence reflected, to disperse the hideous congregation.)

Waiting in the armchair, he realised how abruptly and entirely he had passed beyond shadows and intimations. Here, on the river, was what they called the real thing. At last! And what more terrible form for the real thing to take than this, bodies floating in grotesque passage down a river? (A river still seen as innocent, though; pure, in spite of what it carried.) God help him!

Sam entered with a double Scotch and a pair of binoculars. Unusually, he was smiling.

"Take a look at the river, Sam", Lawrence said. "Are these what I think they are? Bodies?"

As Sam looked at the river, Lawrence stood back, legs apart. Lowering the binoculars, Sam turned to him with a smile which, even as he struggled to control it, grew broader.

"Yes, bodies. Many bodies. Many. Floods from the north, you see", he explained, making floods sound like "foods". "Floods and wars, Mr Feedlie."

"I see", Lawrence said, raising the binoculars himself, looking at the dark shapes and seeing—how clearly! how close!—arms and legs, clothes, individual faces; seeing that some had been maimed, disfigured (mere torsos, one or two?); that some of the bodies were those of children, children drifting down alone, or in the arms of adults. Once, some trick of the current caused one of these young ones to bob up out of the water, briefly creating the illusion that none of them was really dead, that they were travelling this way because they were too poor to travel otherwise, desperate sleepers merely, struggling out of dreams, sleeping again, borne ceaselessly onwards.

"Floods and wars, you say", he said, legs still apart, binoculars at his side. "Floods and wars."

"Yes, floods and wars, Mr Feedlie", Sam said, still smiling, hanging his head.

"Foods", Lawrence said to himself. "Foods from the north. Ha! Sam?"

"Yes, Mr Feedlie?"

"Another Scotch, please. A double."

"Yes, Mr Feedlie."

HE RANG room service to say that he wouldn't be coming down for dinner, he was feeling unwell. Then he stood by the window, binoculars raised, until darkness fell. Only then did he move away from the window, lying down on his bed and closing his eyes.

For a long time all he could see were the bodies, hundreds and hundreds of them, dark sacks spinning and bumping their way through the night to unimaginable obscurity. (What foreign shores, mudbanks, seas?) No cry had gone up at their passage. None. (On the contrary, the night had been very still.) There may well have been floods up north, as Sam had said, and certainly there had been wars, as he himself knew, wars for several years now. . . . And there may well . . . . He was getting confused. What he knew, he told himself, sitting up—all he knew, in fact—was that victims of these wars and floods were being borne past him at this very moment, in the darkness, unseen.

Then, strangely, as if he had reached some sort of limit, he stopped thinking about the bodies for a time. He thought instead of the talks he had had that day

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with Chan and Brown Ltd—thought about them in extraordinary detail, as if the kind of attention he'd been giving the bodies wouldn't leave him, was appropriate here too. His directors at home, he knew, would be delighted at the outcome. On his return, he would be warmly congratulated (taken out to dinner, no doubt); but in his account of the negotiations he doubted that there would be much of his former optimism and eagerness, his former sense that there was something almost splendid about Wyatt and Wishart, their expanding empire. How could there be?

Perhaps, therefore, the time had come for him to consider the offer of early retirement that had been made recently? Perhaps his wife, Deborah (he must ring her—he always rang her when away on trips), had been right when she said that early retirement would be better than a job which, two weeks out of four, had him checking into hotels like these?

The Master Builder

On leave, he must have slung his British Warm
Across this chair, hugged, kissed, and joshed them all—
That fire still warms the corners of the room.

His cap-badge showed the way the land could lie
For one more tommy coming home for good:
The Gunners' wheel above its *Ubique*.

He found the House that Jack built tumbling down
About their ears: the devil left to pay.
He picked things up; his ropes could take the strain.

He squared the family circle, found a skill
For throwing sky-hooks up against the clouds;
With blood for mortar raised the roof and wall

That set his brother and his sisters free.
They packed their cases, off to pack their brains
By ways that he had made. They made their way.

And where he grew, the little Market Town
Spun at his finger-tips: that tarnished wheel
Flashed out its golden spokes; became the sun.

A Monumental Mason. Near and wide
He played the jester, but they knew him king,
Bone-shaking off to Charlestons in his Ford,

Hanging one-handed, striking down a grin
From church-clock high: a monkey on a stick,
Or banging aces at some farmer's lawn.

He stood in his foundations, making clear
His rule, his measure. Children trooped the Yard,
The House that Jack built now set fair and square.

And still the family ghosts go whispering,
Whatever houses they inhabit now:
"You owe your brother Tommy everything."

Teasing me still, he strolls the garden where
His old Victoria Plum nods in the wind,
And *Ubique*: his hands build everywhere.

Peter Scupham

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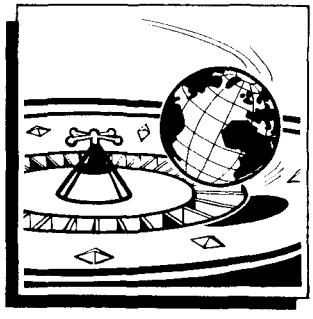
Zbigniew Brzezinski

Destinations

Strasbourg or Sarajevo?



LET ME BEGIN by posing a question which I think has some historical significance—whether the future of Eastern Europe and the future of the Soviet Union involve a road "from Yalta to Sarajevo" or a road "to Strasbourg". That, in a sense, is the historical dilemma which the region that has been dominated by Soviet Communism for the last several decades now confronts.

It is time to pose this issue because the changes that we have been seeing in Eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union have so far been very hopeful. But the period of hope may be coming to an end, and the confrontation with reality that is now going to take place may prove far more difficult than the disintegration of existing Communist political and economic structures. That disintegration, of course, involves an historic change, and in a sense we have all been witnesses to and vicarious participants in one of the most unusual periods of modern times.

Until quite recently, I used to say that what we are seeing is, in many respects, analogous to that period in history described as "the Spring of Nations"—1848, a time of enormous expectations, of the rise of liberty, of political idealism. I no longer feel that this is an adequate analogy, because that period actually came to a rapid end through a reactionary restoration which dominated subsequent decades. Now I am increasingly drawn to the view that what we have been witnessing, and what we continue to witness, has many more parallels to the decade of 1790—exactly 200 years ago. It was a decade initiated by the French Revolution, with its enormous impact on political, economic, and international realities.

ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI, *a long-term contributor to* ENCOUNTER, *was National Security Adviser to President Carter (1977-81). He is Counsellor at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, and Professor of American Foreign Policy at the Paul Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, Washington, D.C. His most recent book is "The Grand Failure: The Birth and Death of Communism in the Twentieth Century" (Scribner, 1989).*

In many respects, much of what we have experienced in the course of this century has been a consequence of the forces and the ideas and the clashes unleashed by the intellectual force of the French Revolution. That era is now coming to an end. We have seen the collapse of an ideology that in the course of this century challenged the principles of pragmatic liberal democracy, that postulated a different notion of the relationship of the individual to society and of society to the state. And that great debate—which was fought out to some extent on the battlefields, and to some extent in a prolonged Cold War—ultimately involved issues raised by the French Revolution.

That chapter has been closed; and the question now is whether it is possible to build an effective, pragmatic, open, liberal, democratic order on the ruins of a system that was based on the Communist ideology. This is why it is perhaps useful to think of the future in terms of the guideposts "Sarajevo" or "Strasbourg".

In answering, one has to see the distinctions between Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, and within Eastern Europe itself. In Eastern Europe we have, in effect, three sectors, each likely to have a somewhat different future: East Germany, the Northern Tier, and the Southern Tier.

East Germany is clearly going to be a German problem; for it is going to be resolved within the German framework, and it will be resolved ahead of the rest of the problems facing Eastern Europe. The Germans have the capacity, the wealth, and the emotional commitment stemming from the process of unification to address that problem on a broad front.

Progress will be made, though it is increasingly realised that it will be costly and difficult. The East Germans expect a prompt elimination of the dramatic difference between their standard of living and that in West Germany, and it is this sense of urgency that will raise the enormous price of the whole enterprise. If the East Germans were more patient, more isolated—if their expectations were much lower, ranging over the next decade or so—the cost would not be so high. But the Federal Republic of Germany can handle it, and the only question is whether it will be internationally destabilising.

Here, I am also relatively optimistic. I believe that, by and large, the unification of Germany will be accompanied by the acceleration of West European integration; that the West German commitment to Europe is genuine and serious, and should not be doubted; that excessive doubt on this

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score could prove to be a negative, self-fulfilling prophecy; and that formulae will be found for resolving the security dilemmas which a united Germany will pose.

The security dilemmas will confront us in different ways over the next few years. Initially, it will be a matter of accommodating a unified Germany, both within NATO and within an all-European security structure; and the solution for this will entail some transitional Soviet presence on the old *DDR* territories of today's East Germany.

In the longer run, the security issue will be more complex. It is, I believe, an absolute certainty that in the course of this decade a unified Germany will say to all concerned (and particularly to the USA) that it no longer wishes, 50 years after the end of the War, to be the only Occupied country in Europe. It will suggest, instead, that the proper arrangement for Germany is one similar to that for Norway, or for France, or for Spain; that is to say, membership of NATO but without foreign troops on its soil. It will be very difficult to resist this demand; in fact, it will be impossible to resist it. Hence, we have to think ahead to dramatically different security arrangements for Europe in the near future.

THE SITUATION BETWEEN the Northern Tier and the Southern Tier in Eastern Europe is somewhat more complex. In fact, I would say that the Southern Tier—Romania, Bulgaria, and in a very special way, Yugoslavia—are really at the tail-end of the process of de-Communisation. The countries in which more significant change will be taking place (and whose future direction can be more clearly predicted) are Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. There the creation of pluralistic democratic institutions and the eventual creation of a free market are likely to be pursued more rapidly and on a broader front.

In the East, there is a tendency to shift from one utopian panacea—namely, that "socialism will solve all problems"—to another equally simple idealisation: that the free-market system automatically produces prosperity and social justice, and that it is relatively easy to institutionalise. This hope entails a rather naive understanding of democracy and an underestimation of its complexities and subtleties. Creating new institutions in Eastern Europe to institutionalise democracy and promote free-market processes is going to be far more difficult than people in the region understand or we in the West appreciate.

The economic problem is particularly gripping. We know of no previous experiments, no precedents, for the transformation of a Communist social order—writ large, a comprehensive socio-economic system—into free-market economies; and know of no successful transformation of communist dictatorships into pluralistic democracies. Probably the latter is easier than the former, but under the circumstances, the two have to be undertaken at the same time.

The country which is pioneering this process is clearly Poland, for it has the most broadly institutionalised democratic organisation—Solidarity—which has adopted a far-reaching programme of economic reform. Economists call it "the big bang approach": an across-the-board attempt to solve everything at once, to eliminate subsidies, terminate as much as possible of the national deficit, attain convertibility, wipe out inflation, unleash the free-market mechanism of supply-and-demand and prices, to privatise, open the door to foreign trade, accept bankruptcies, and last but not least, to tolerate unemployment.

It is an extraordinarily ambitious programme being pursued with enormous commitment and a sense of urgency. If it succeeds, the chances are high that the Czechoslovaks and Hungarians will accelerate their own reform programmes; but if it falters, they may well be discouraged. I think the chances are reasonably high that this programme will encounter massive difficulties within the year.

The first steps have been moderately successful, particularly in convertibility. Today, in that recently stagnant-statist Communist country with worthless money, you can walk into a bank carrying a pile of paper zlotys of any amount that you want to change, and walk out of it with dollars at a rate which is better than the black-market one. And it is holding after three months. Inflation is down dramatically. It was 75% per month in January; down to 6% in March. The preliminary estimates for April predict a rate of about 4-5%.

But Poland's unemployment rate is rising, and its production has dropped by 25%. Hence the cost of its accomplishments may be a severe recession, which could become a depression. The economy might simply be stifled. By summer, rising large-scale unemployment may cause political unrest. Much depends upon what the Polish government can do and how the West responds, i.e. the extent to which there will be some pump-priming in order to prevent this first post-Communist experiment from failing.

MY FEELING is that the chances of success are probably somewhat better than fair. In part, this is because I see the programme as soundly conceived—the only way to change a statist-Communist economy is, in fact, to do so on a broad front. It has been tried the other way in Titoist Yugoslavia and under Gorbachov over the last five years in the Soviet Union; and it has not worked. There is still national discipline and public support in Poland, following its sense of

Comrade Lincoln?

London

ONE CANNOT BE *familiar with some basic facts of American history if one thinks that Mr Gorbachev's efforts to preserve the Soviet Union are comparable to President Lincoln's struggle to preserve the unity of the United States.*

The Baltic states were forcibly incorporated into the USSR by Stalin in a deal with his recent enemy, Hitler, this illegal annexation being followed by the massacre and persecution of large numbers of aristocrats, managers and "kulaks".

All of the Southern states comprising the Confederacy had originally joined the American Union of their own free will, and none of their people had ever been murdered or persecuted by Northern Yankees sent for this purpose from the Federal capital.

THE INDEPENDENT

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political emancipation. My guess is that the West will try to be responsive because the West, too, will realise that this first pioneering experiment must not be permitted to fail. If it doesn't fail, others may begin to move forward.

But there the difficulties are also enormous. Take, for example, Czechoslovakia, which superficially is the most successful of the Communist economies. Because of that, Czechoslovak political emancipation has a curiously complacent quality to it, a feeling of unease about the possibilities of free markets, an anxious sense of concern as to what this will do to subsidies, lower prices, and cheaper housing, to practically free transportation, free medicine and social security. There is an uneasiness in the Czechoslovak government as to how far and fast it should move on reforms, and how much of the "accomplishments" of socialism should be preserved—a temptation to try to find some "third way", something between capitalism and socialism, both with human faces.

These uncertainties seem massive, and if the economic experiment should falter, whether in Poland or in Czechoslovakia or in Hungary (where the political situation is likely to be somewhat unstable), then we are likely to see a turn to what I call "*Sarajevo*". That is to say, increased reliance on nationalist passions—no return-to-Communism, but a turn toward much more assertive, dramatic, violent, extremist, intolerant Nationalism—because that is the only viable political alternative in this setting.

Should that be the case, it is clearly in our Western interest that East Europe move progressively—not all at once, but some countries ahead of others—toward "*Strasbourg*". That is to say, toward a larger, democratic community, based on cooperation within societies and between societies. It is very important for us to cultivate cooperation between societies, and I would like to see, for example, a great deal of Western aid conditional on the notion that the East European societies engage in a certain measure of joint regional planning. A sense of regional community needs to be fostered, not only for economic but also for political reasons.

We in the West, in my view, also have to address the problems of the region with a greater degree of appreciation for the long-range dangers of this difficult undertaking. We, too, have been swept up to some extent by the euphoria of the sudden "death of Communism", the apparent ease with which it has disintegrated. We may well underestimate the amount of money, support and technical advice, private business stimulus, and general assistance and coordination from the West needed for this region to move "beyond Communism" to the successful institutionalisation of political and economic democracy.

I would like to see the US government appoint a Cabinet-level coordinator for our domestic and international efforts to work with the Europeans and the Japanese, involving the private sector as well as Congress. We need to promote much more deliberate coordination with the Europeans and the Japanese on the longer-range implications of this very complex process of change.

"Leninism" By-the-Book

Moscow

A PROTEST *in Kiev to mark Thursday's fourth anniversary of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster turned into a powerful display of Ukrainian nationalism yesterday. The demonstration took place on the day the Soviet government announced it was planning to spend £16 billion over the next two years to help the Chernobyl victims.*

Four years after the event, 1.5 million people are thought to be suffering from high levels of radiation following the accident. Many have not received the medical treatment and special privileges victims were promised. Others still live in the contaminated zone. The Soviet press and public opinion accuse many government figures, doctors and scientists of deliberately underestimating the scale of the disaster.

The government programme will help with resettlement and providing the population with "clean" food and improved health care and social welfare.

Estimates vary as to how much money is needed to deal fully with the effects of the explosion at the nuclear power station. The Byelorussian representative at the United Nations appealed for £17 billion of aid in February, but a prominent Soviet MP said earlier this month that £200 billion would be required over the next 10 years.

While 60,000 people thronged the streets of the Ukrainian capital, police guarding a statue of Lenin were pelted with books written by the founder of the Soviet state, in a burlesque celebration of yesterday's 120th anniversary of his birth.

Marcus Warren
in THE DAILY TELEGRAPH *(London)*

THE SITUATION IN the Soviet Union is rather different from Eastern Europe. First of all, we are not yet dealing there with the collapse of the Communist system politically and economically; and we are certainly not confronted yet by the challenge of how to construct a successful institutionalised Western-type pluralistic democracy based on the free-market system. We are, rather, dealing with the malaise of Marxist-Leninist practice in the Soviet Union, and its contradictions in an intensifying crisis will probably in the near future produce some significant departures.

Gorbachov appears to be shaping a new formula for his domestic policies which will combine dramatic economic reforms—and he is watching with particular closeness what is happening in Poland—with a newly-asserted political authoritarianism, based increasingly less on ideology and more on Russian Nationalism. Some of the appointments which Gorbachov recently made to the Soviet Presidential Council reflect a growing realisation that with the waning of Communist ideology the only source of social cement for difficult actions is indeed Russian nationalist sentiment. That might be his platform: economic reform imposed with greater authority from the top down—authority reinforced by a more deliberate exploitation of Russian nationalism and

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Russian orthodoxy, the only source of emotional support for political action that is left in the contemporary Soviet Union.

But will this work? Here, I am forced to be very pessimistic; for, quite frankly, I cannot conceive of a policy that is likely to work successfully under contemporary Soviet conditions. The reason is not only the massive economic crisis of the Soviet Union, which in scale overshadows anything we have seen in Eastern Europe; it is rooted ultimately in the fact that the Soviet Union is a multinational political system in an age of intensifying nationalist passions.

Lithuania, in many respects, has become the litmus test of the process of change in the Soviet Union. If Lithuania is allowed to secede, it means that the process of "democratisation" is being effectively pursued—with a concomitant "dismantling of the Soviet Union". There is no way of confining that process to Lithuania alone; it inevitably involves Estonia, Latvia, Georgia, Tadzhikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and, not least, the Ukraine. Until recently, observers have tended to downgrade Ukrainian nationalism as a purely local issue. I have argued the contrary, suggesting that what we see in the western Ukraine is the fundamental equivalent of the Piedmont of Italy during the 19th-century *Risorgimento*, the Italian national awakening—that is to say, the concentrated source of national mood that, once sparked, will spread like wildfire.

Recently it was reported that nationalist candidates had won the local Ukrainian elections—not just in Lvov (where it was not a surprise), not just in Kiev (which was a surprise, and is important because it is the capital), but even in Kharkov, in the eastern Ukraine—that portion considered by Moscow observers to be massively "Russified" and "devoid" of any national consciousness. That is a signal of how intense nationalism is becoming.

All this makes the future of the Soviet Union very difficult to manage. For if the Kremlin concedes on Lithuania, it accelerates the process of a peaceful dismantling of the Soviet Union. If it does not concede on Lithuania, the Kremlin will simply accentuate the intensity of inevitable collision.

I preclude the possibility of the Soviet Union becoming some form of voluntary "Commonwealth", because nationalist feeling is too conflictual a force, particularly in its early stages of ecstatic emancipation, to permit the kind of compromise on which a commonwealth has to exist. There is just too much accumulated hatred and resentment and bitterness for such a peaceful transformation. In any case, a democratic commonwealth has to be based on the principle of voluntarism; regions can be in it or out of it as they wish. If that principle were to be operative, a whole host of republics would want to be out of it.

THUS I SEE ONLY three possible futures for the Soviet Union—none of them very good. It can either remain an Empire. Or it will fragment. Or—and I confess that I wouldn't have said this six months ago—it is possible that there is going to be a Romanian type of revolution before too long.

"Empire", in the sense of simply a great Russian reassertion, may be what Mikhail Gorbachov is inevitably leading toward; but, once again, in the age of nationalism, is any imperial form based on the domination of a single nation which accounts for only 50% of the population, going to be a viable solution? It means a series of Ulsters, of Azerbaijans, of Lebanons. And that is "the road to Sarajevo".

"Fragmentation" has many of the same consequences, because any kind of dissolution of the Soviet Union would be fraught with unimaginable complications. We are not looking at some 19th-century overseas empire. Ultimately, the last Englishman could get on a boat and sail home from Bombay when the British empire was finished. Ultimately, the last French *colon* could be expelled from Algiers and sail for Marseilles when the French empire was over and done with. But one is dealing here with a land empire where there are no obvious borders, and where, most importantly, there has been enormous national commingling. The Soviet Union has 290 million people—145 million are Russians, 145 million are non-Russians. But the operative statistic is yet to come: 65 million of its people live outside their national homes. They will be the catalysts and victims of communal violence of the kind that we have seen in Azerbaijan and Armenia, where there are now approximately half-a-million refugees.

THE THIRD alternative, which I no longer dismiss, is the possibility of a "Romanian-type" anti-Communist upheaval in the Soviet Union. What strikes me increasingly in my visits to the USSR, talking to its citizens, particularly young Russians, is a deep sense of their almost passionate hatred for the words "Communism" and "Communist".

Young students, young intellectuals and workers loathe and despise the old system, the *ancien régime*, with its privileges, its hypocrisy, its deception, and the suffering that it has inflicted on the Soviet people, over so many years. And these feelings are now becoming pervasive and extraordinarily intense. I am not suggesting that a "Romanian-type" situation will necessarily occur, but that for the first time we can, it appears, no longer dismiss such a possibility arising out of some horrendous difficulty, or some major incident or unforeseen collision. And what this would lead to is hard to predict.

In my judgment the most likely road for the Soviet Union is that of "*Sarajevo*". From the international point of view, however, this may not be a disaster, for it means that the Soviet Union is likely to be preoccupied with its own internal problems for a long time to come. It may also mean that the United States will probably have the opportunity to resolve some of its strategic and regional difficulties with the Soviet Union. Many of the arms control negotiations will, probably, be successfully concluded. We can address ourselves to such issues as the relationship with Japan; the European consolidation of a larger Community; the American development of a more constructive relationship with our Latin American neighbours; the problems of development.

In other words, an optimistic conclusion for the world need not be a utopian solution.

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Adrian Smith

"Temporary Gentleman"

My Father & World War II

IN FRONT OF ME stands a framed photograph of a country road in Flanders soon after the Nazi surrender in May 1945. I hesitated before writing such an emotive place-name; perhaps Flanders will always be associated with an earlier conflict. But the winter of 1944 saw some of World War II's fiercest fighting in what so often has been Europe's most contested battleground.

In Britain, before 1914, Flanders was synonomous with Marlborough's greatest victories. Today, for a nation which in all other respects pursues an unhealthy infatuation with "our finest hour", the word is still stubbornly evocative of a previous, far more pointless sacrifice. On television, *'Allo, 'Allo* can ridicule the trauma of Occupation with scarcely a hint of public protest, but not even *Blackadder* can mock life in the trenches without a final gesture of apology and respect. The glimpse of Belgian countryside in my photograph scarcely accords with the images that invariably spring to mind when mention is made of the territory to the north and west of Mons. Despite an under-exposed print, it is clear that the sun is shining, the trees are in leaf, and the fields are hidden from the road by a dense and verdant bank of grasses and weeds. Perhaps there is, after all, an echo of the Great War: the starkly contrasting landscape behind the lines in Edmund Blunden's *Undertones of War*. Nevertheless, this is Flanders 1945.

The only hint of discord is a solitary pole, bereft of power cable and insulators—the only hint, that is, other than the large car filling the foreground of the picture. The Humber's carefully tailored canvas lagging is rolled back to expose a radiator grille that, chromed not camouflaged, would befit a Cord or Cadillac. A huge, billowing pair of front mudguards proudly display the sword insignia of the British Army in north-west Europe. On the driver's side poses an officer in his late twenties, one highly-polished shoe hidden by the grass verge, its companion still inside the vehicle. A medal ribbon and three pips are clearly visible. With Sam Browne belt and shoulder-strap, his buttons glistening and a grin on his face, perhaps the Captain is en route to a plum posting at 21st Army Group Headquarters.

In fact, he is already an Adjutant in Brussels, and is enjoying an unexpected break from routine administration. Closer examination of the photograph reveals a leaping antelope on the Captain's cap badge: like Field Marshal Montgomery, he is from "The Warwicks". He and the Humber hail from the same battered city. Both were born within the same square mile: a network of Edwardian terraced houses adjoining one of Coventry's earliest car plants. The officer so visibly relishing the first weeks of peace is my father.

However relaxed he appeared when the camera clicked, he had clearly been assigned staff car and driver for a purpose. In fact, his destination that warm day in late May 1945 was a ceremony of re-interment for Belgian villagers massacred in an *SS* reprisal a year earlier. The Adjutant had been ordered to deputise for the Brigadier as His Majesty's Government's representative, hence the Humber. Today, attendance at so sombre an occasion would cast a pall over all other activities, solemnity being the order of the day. In May 1945, still engaged in relentless psychological adjustments, soldiers plunged from euphoria to depression and back again in a few hours.

A COMMUNITY in grief intruded only briefly upon the holiday mood. This was the legacy—and for my father only a brief legacy—of extended combat. The British judged that regular rotation of units could secure up to 400 combat days before individual soldiers began cracking up. As most troops had not seen action before June 1944, extended combat was often measured in weeks not months. Many, however, complained at just how many of those weeks had been spent continuously on the front line.

The emotional price of survival was high. Hostilities were at an end, but you continued to take every day as it came. Cynicism and resistance to shock were necessary psychological weapons, the irony being that you were often unaware of any temporary (or for a sad few, lasting) character-change. This was doubtless the case for an essentially sensitive man like Alf Smith.

Officers in the British Army were not supposed to have solidly working-class names like Alf, even in 1945. For

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superiors in the Mess he was often Alfred. His Brigadier in Brussels preferred the infuriatingly patronising "Alfie"—a crude and recurrent device for reminding Dad that, however unexpected his elevation in the military hierarchy, he was still on the very first rung of the new meritocratic ladder. All his life my father has been an Alf, but from 1943 to the end of 1946, in messes from Budbrook to Berlin, he was Alfred Smith, holder of the King's Commission, and rare graduate of the shop floor.

BY 1943 THE BRITISH ARMY officer corps had been transformed from the homogeneous élite that, Territorials notwithstanding, had taken the British Expeditionary Force to war. Having trawled the progeny of the English ruling class, the War Office Selection Boards had to look further afield, and from 1942 the emphasis was on aptitude and potential, not simply social background. The system of selection had been regularised, interviews and tests made more demanding, and the value of psychiatric expertise reluctantly acknowledged—a belated but much trumpeted triumph of meritocracy which encouraged a 25% rise in applications for commissions. By the end of the War, these more rigorous procedures were responsible for over 50,000 serving officers (predictably, the Guards had insisted on sticking to tradition and the old school tie). The Army gained in both quantity and quality: after 1941 the average passing-out mark at Officer Cadet Training Units rose by 12%.

OCTUS were, of course, strictly "for the duration", as were the Army's efforts to recruit its leaders from a more diverse social background. In 1939, 84% of the cadets at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, were ex-public-school, and of these nearly half were sons of Regular officers. Just as today (although now the Ministry of Defence would deny it), the Guards and the most prestigious county regiments were ultra-selective with regard to which particular schools their new subalterns had attended. From the outbreak of war to the introduction of War Office Selection Boards, the procedure for gaining a commission ran parallel to the system adopted in 1914: a haphazard and characteristically English form of upper-middle-class self-advancement, immortalised by Evelyn Waugh in *Men At Arms*.

At the onset of both World Wars, therefore, most new officers shared the same social and educational background as the tiny Regular Establishment. They had the right credentials—family connections, a suitable school (cadet training . . . and winning one's "colours" for prowess at sports), varsity perhaps; and, most necessary of all, an obvious facility for slipping effortlessly into Mess life. Although World War I generated no less than 229,316 commissions, thus securing diversity by sheer weight of numbers, the peacetime officers corps proved remarkably resilient in attitude if not in actual personnel (a quarter of them were dead or wounded by December 1914). The Sandhurst historian Ian Beckett has suggested that, after four years of fighting, most Regulars appeared even more introspective and detached from civilian society than they were before the War[1]—a disturbing thought, given the (to say the least) ambivalent attitude which most officers had displayed in 1914 towards enforcing Irish Home Rule. Like their counterparts a quarter of a century later, thousands of sixth-formers in Liberal England followed a direct path from house-study to Army depot: education remained the prime determinant of officer potential. Contemptuous of Territorial and New Army officers, the professionals still monopolised senior appointments, moulding the young and impressionable into unattractive replicas of themselves.

The public schools were to provide at least a quarter of all "temporary gentlemen" commissioned during World War II. However, the War Office Selection Boards' success relied on an even more potent symbol of the new meritocracy: the grant-aided grammar school. Given the overwhelming preponderance of grammar-school boys entering OCTU in the final years of the War, my father's promotion from the ranks seems all the more remarkable. For, contrary to popular assumption, it would appear that the number of officers from a genuinely disadvantaged background were very few and far between. Not many members of his Officers' Mess in Brussels had left school for an engineering works at the age of fourteen. How did he get there? Thanks to a persuasive blend of common sense, self-discipline, practical aptitude, and above all, sporting prowess and good luck. On parade during basic training, he found himself the only clean-shaven member of the platoon. His success in somehow securing water from frozen pipes no doubt earned barrack-room disdain, but it brought him to the attention of the Company Commander. Here was a man with some initiative. Furthermore, not only could he strip down and rebuild an engine, but he was a county-class batsman. Edgbaston's loss was to be the Army's gain: "Have you ever thought of becoming an officer . . . ?"

LIKE SO MANY OTHER temporary officers, Alf Smith's life was transformed by World War II. For my father, "the People's War" was a genuinely traumatic experience: it radically altered his perspective on the world. Upward social mobility, however brief and artificial, created fresh expectations and aspirations. Demobbed and left to fend for himself in austerity Britain, there was no way he could speedily adjust to the harsh realities of civilian life. Of course, in many respects he didn't, even though "Civvy Street" demanded the sharpest psychological adjustment of them all.

Clearly a major study of Dad's generation is still waiting to be written. Possibly at this very moment a young Arthur Marwick is engaged on just such a work. But perhaps it is already too late—this is a generation that is already starting to disappear. All I can do here is reflect upon the impact and consequences of a peculiarly unique war upon one man—and, indirectly, upon his son.

Any observations re Captain Smith would no doubt apply to countless other "temporary gentlemen": civilians in uniforms and Sam Brownes, suddenly released by the Admiralty, War Office, or Air Ministry into a harsh new world.

[1] Ian Beckett, "The British Army, 1914-18: The Illusion of Change", in John Turner (ed.), *Britain and the First World War* (1988).

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After World War I, many ex-officers found calm in isolated refuges, where psychological wounds could heal and long-forgotten ideals be revived; BEF veterans on lonely small-holdings were a common event after 1919. Yet the generation that defeated Hitler, however appalling their individual experiences, rarely demonstrated a similar intensity of disillusion. What many did share was a reluctance simply to accept whatever work was available, even when their old jobs were waiting for them. However novel his marital bliss, for men like Alf Smith ration coupons, queues, and mortgage repayments on an unheated, sparsely furnished house were a rude shock after Mess life in Berlin. Spurred on by my mother, he was determined not to slip back into a married version of his pre-War life—a return to the shop floor was solely a pecuniary measure, and not permanent. In 1946 thousands of others, in similarly adverse circumstances, shared the same high expectations and the same determination not to waste the experiences and opportunities accrued over the preceding six years.

No doubt there were numerous exceptions, and one can too easily be swayed by popular fiction and drama, but the impression I have is that survivors of the Western Front were on the whole reluctant to recall the experience. In their waking hours at least, these men seem to have made a conscious effort to block the horrors of the trenches out of their minds. Unlike Australia or New Zealand, where ANZAC memories were an essential element in the forging of national identity, in Britain I have rarely met anybody whose father or grandfather repeatedly referred to their time in Flanders—in marked contrast to the veterans of the next great conflict.

About fifteen years ago, I began making a mental note of friends' references to their fathers' experiences during World War II. Not necessarily the experiences themselves (although many turned out to be fascinating), but the regularity with which they were or were not recalled. Needless to say, my conclusions are impressionistic; they have no empirical base whatsoever. But some men, emulating their fathers between the Wars, do seem to have opted for virtual silence. As Sebastian Faulks pointed out in his column on a similar theme (*Independent on Sunday*, 11 March 1990), these are often the ones with the most interesting experiences. However, most men have over the years been happy to reminisce at length, provided that the family remained receptive. By the mid-1960s, however, the anecdotes were all too often worn out, and the audience indifferent.

IN MANY RESPECTS, my generation—born in the late 1940s and early 1950s—were as much children of the War as our elder brothers and sisters. By the time we reached adolescence, the fascination with an event in which we had not participated—and about which we were so knowledgeable—was waning. Yet as children many of us had learnt of the family's wartime adventures, whether front-line or home-front. Long before the first oral history archive, the new tribal legends were being passed down from one generation to the next. Brought up on a diet of war comics and stiff-upper-lip films, in common with many of my fellow schoolboys, I acquired a detailed knowledge of my father's campaigning. On holiday, tucked up in a caravan bunk, I would listen attentively to what I now realise was a sanitised version of the Normandy campaign—an eight-year-old needed sheltering from the bloodshed of that deadly concentration of dense scrubland and high hedgerows, the *bocage*. Later, on caravan sites in Mablethorpe or New Milton, I heard again and again the stories of running a prisoner-of-war camp in the winter of 1944-45.

The passing years brought a sharper focus, so that by the age of twelve, for example, I was aware of orders to machine-gun all prisoners if the Ardennes counter-offensive had endangered Dad's camp. Did I know that the *SS* were left naked in order to break them? I am thankful to say that such information did not fuel a perverse fascination with all things military; having, if anything, exactly the opposite effect. At home in Coventry, the War remained a very visible presence in the late 1950s. Not all burnt-out houses and bomb-sites had been cleared, and the city centre still retained a few "prefab" shops.

It was probably the consecration of the new Cathedral in 1962 which finally purged the Blitz as a traumatic event that had occurred only the day before yesterday, as opposed to a receding memory. Even then, the purge was only partial, and Coventry's older citizens still seize every opportunity to revive memories of devastation and heroism. It would be both ungracious and ungrateful to deny them their anniversary celebrations. (And I must confess that even I still can't show students Humphrey Jennings's 1941 *Heart of Britain* without feeling emotional.) However, powered by high-octane nostalgia fuel, Coventry's finest hour is today an integral part of the West Midlands heritage industry. Sir Basil Spence's phoenix, rising from its *Luftwaffe*-induced ashes, now symbolises "The City in the Heart of Shakespeare Country". Tourists have on offer the Bard, and the Blitz. Every Coventrian over the age of 55 has memories of November 1940, and rightly so. Yet, however heroic my father's efforts to douse an incendiary bomb, the story is so familiar that sometimes I forget I wasn't present. For the record, he was riddled with shrapnel and lost his sight for three weeks, thus delaying his entry into the Army. My cynicism cannot be allowed to cloud his courage.

FOR MEN LIKE my father, travelling abroad in peacetime held no fears. To "go to the Continent" in the 1950s (by implication, from Great Britain to a separate geopolitical entity called Europe) was to revive old memories and revisit old haunts in less trying circumstances. Every spring, Dad would lead a convoy of "Queen Mary" low-loaders to the Paris Air Show: an annual invasion of Armstrong-Whitworth's first-generation missiles, and last-generation civil aircraft (remember the Argosy?).

Negotiating in pidgin French with the local *douaniers* and *gendarmerie*, my father was in his element: ensuring the well-being of his unit and its equipment in a republic wracked by crisis and uncertainty. For three weeks, the unambiguous officer-and-men relationship re-emerged. Again, a single photograph speaks volumes. Dad and one of his drivers beside the Eiffel Tower, probably in 1960. An ex-

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Welsh-Guardsman towers over his slight companion; yet from the look on their faces it is clear who is in charge. While the Welshman (according to my father a genius at manoeuvering monstrous articulated loads through seemingly impenetrable backwaters in the Pas de Calais) looks uncomfortable playing tourist with the boss—not because he is away from home; he first discovered France as long ago as 6 June 1944—Dad exudes the contentment of a man who is in charge and who knows that things are going well. Dapper as ever, and dressed in a trenchcoat, he is clearly relishing being back in his city. The annual three weeks in Paris were the highlight of his year, and when he took my mother and me to the Hotel Baltimore in August 1963, I began to see why. Needless to say, the drivers and fitters stayed in a different hotel; an arrangement which, in the context of Britain's post-War industrial record, requires no further comment.

My first visit to Paris confirmed that Dad's claims were all true: he really did know the city inside out. It was to be another two decades before I finally accepted his story that he had visited the capital while it was still in the process of being liberated. This was so good a story—the equivalent of beating Hemingway to Harry's Bar by a pink gin—that it could not possibly be true. Late adolescent cynicism reinforced an earlier gut scepticism. Only encroaching middle age brought belief . . . .

THE 59TH (STAFFORDSHIRE) DIVISION, its third brigade partly made up of the 1/7th Battalion The Royal Warwickshire Regiment, left Newhaven on 27 June 1944, the day after Montgomery and Dempsey had launched the costly *Operation Epsom* against German defences around Caen. The British Second Army had consolidated its initial bridgehead, and now, belatedly, was seeking to break out into the Normandy hinterland. XII Corps, including the newly arrived 59th and 53rd (Welsh) Divisions, provided a final infusion of genuine reinforcements.

Britain's reserve of front-line troops was now exhausted, and the size of its armies began to shrink as casualties took their toll. In terms of manpower, XII Corps represented the British Empire's last great contribution to the destruction of Nazi resistance in the west. Yet no matter how many military exercises had been undertaken over the preceding two or three years, these were still raw recruits when confronted with the bloody reality of fighting-conditions in the *bocage*. Notwithstanding a few ex-Desert Rats in the Sergeants' Mess, scarcely any of these men—including their platoon commanders—had combat experience; hence their absence from the initial assault.

My father never hid the fact that he did not land on D-Day, and in 1984 he was acutely embarrassed when a newspaper article, recalling that he had led the first anniversary parade, erroneously suggested his presence at Gold Beach twelve months earlier. (I suspect the occasion left a much deeper impression on Dad than on Duff Cooper, who, in order to take the salute, had been obliged to leave his Paris Embassy at a delicate moment in Anglo-French wrangling over the future of Syria.)

The 197th Brigade, of which my father's battalion made up one-third, survived for two months in the front line. A baptism of fire in the battle for Caen was followed by slow advance south of the now pulverised city. On 7 August, they crossed the Orne north of Thury-Harcourt, moving south-east to take up position midway along the northern flank of the Falaise Gap. With the Americans and Free French to the south, and the British (plus Canadians and Poles) to the north and west, the Allies planned to envelop the Germans by cutting off their only means of escape—eastwards between Falaise and Argentan.

After two days of solid fighting on 17-19 August, the Germans were clearly withdrawing, but my father's battalion had been mauled at the hands of arguably the toughest and most experienced of Germany's fighting forces in the west: II *SS Panzer* Corps. Encountering Tiger tanks for the first time, Bren-gun carriers were hastily abandoned for the relative safety of the slit-trench. Each company's casualties were appalling, with a rate of attrition comparable to that in 1914-18.[2] By the time the Falaise Gap was finally sealed, on 21 August, my father found that the majority of his fellow subalterns were either dead or seriously wounded.

Despite another German counter-attack, XII Corps could now advance towards the Seine. On 26 August, for the remnants of 197th Brigade, the battle for Normandy was over.[3] With scarcely a platoon left to command, my father had already been pulled out of the front line. Awaiting a fresh posting, he was little more than a glorified runner at Brigade HQ.

Meanwhile, with American approval, General Leclerc's French 2nd Armoured Division was racing 120 miles to secure control of the capital in the name of Charles de Gaulle. Advance units were in Paris on the evening of 24 August, and by mid-afternoon of the following day the German occupying forces had surrendered. Despite the fighting that still persisted around the Palais de Luxembourg, de Gaulle entered the city in an open car. In a symbolic gesture of continuity and legitimacy he went straight to his old office in the Ministry of War. Twenty-four hours later, the three generals of the Free French forces—Leclerc, Koenig, and de Gaulle—led the people of Paris in a jubilant march from the Arc de Triomphe to Notre Dame. Astonishingly, on that same day, 26 August 1944, my father was also in Paris. Apprehension, if not outright fear, rendered him oblivious to the historic events taking place just a few streets away.

While Leclerc's tanks were still fighting their way into the city, my father and a fellow officer were returning by jeep

[2] In his ENCOUNTER essay "Nobility & War: the Unselfish Commitment?" (March 1990), John Grigg points to "economy of fighting" as the principal cause of lower front-line casualties in the Second World War compared with the First. Yet, even allowing for the caution of a commander like Montgomery, where prolonged warfare did take place the Army suffered losses comparable to the most savage battles of the Western Front.

[3] As this essay indicates, I am not a military historian. I am therefore especially appreciative of the inspiration and information to be found in John Keegan's *Six Armies of Normandy* (Jonathan Cape, 1982), John Ellis's *The Sharp End of War* (David & Charles, 1980), and Max Hasting's *OVERLORD: D-Day and the Battle for Normandy 1944* (Michael Joseph, 1984).

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to Brigade HQ. Still close to the front line, Dad pointed out the proximity of Paris on his road map. His young but worldly companion, a paragon of the self-confidence and "sense of adventure" ostensibly cultivated by the nation's major public schools, insisted on spending the night at Claridge's. My father, horrified by the notion of disobeying orders, and petrified by the prospect of street-fighting between the Germans and the Resistance, meekly protested. The driver simply turned the jeep east, towards a city which, to most residents of pre-War Coventry, might just as well have been on another planet.

Greeted as heroes, the two "liberators" finally arrived at Claridge's, where one man drank vintage champagne until he was comatose, and the other slept, very lightly, under the bed. To be fair to Dad, shots were still being fired from the roof-tops, even if more and more they came from gun-happy *résistants* than from snipers defying arrest. The following morning my father, ever the sound navigator, drove his severely hung-over companion at high speed out of Paris and back to the safe embrace of 21st Army Group.

Dad's behaviour, as recounted to me in his unconsciously self-deprecating fashion, appeared wholly in character. Yet the story bore every evidence of embellishment and exaggeration—until the occasion ten years ago when, in a pile of old photographs, we discovered his bill from Claridge's. He really had been present at the liberation of Paris (albeit with the very greatest reluctance). The incident neatly contrasted the "great jape" bravado of upper-class youth with the (quite literally) sober survival instincts of the older ex-artisan. In fiction, Dad would have been the canny Staff Sergeant deferring to King's Regulations, and then keeping a wary eye on "the young gentleman". A cliché scenario, and wholly at odds with the real-life situation, where familiar patterns of class and "natural authority" prevailed. Dad would master Paris, but all in his own good time.

On the beaches of Britain in the late 1940s, the knee-length baggy shorts that first saw the light of day in Burma or North Africa were worn with pride. Though too young to remember Army Issue beachwear, I detected at an early age the lingering presence of the Mess in my father's clothes sense: the highly polished brown shoes (strangely, not brogues), the sharply creased slacks, the dark paisley cravat, the epauletted short-sleeved shirt, and the suitably coloured (fawn, olive green?) round-necked cable-stitch pullover. Lecturing at Sandhurst in the mid-1980s, I often found myself staring at off-duty cadets looking eerily like Dad on holiday in 1961.

UNLIKE MY UNCLE (a non-commissioned officer in Italy, 1943-45), whose meticulous dress is still worthy of the parade ground, my father loosened up considerably during the 1960s. By the end of the decade, a moustache which for twenty years had screamed "ex-Army" was framed by a pair of fashionable sideburns. The suits, invariably made-to-measure, were no longer always grey. Casual dress was a lot brighter and far less predictable. The company car went faster and farther, now that the holidays abroad were annual. I can only speculate on whether Dad voted Labour in July 1945; but in an era of Macmillan, Macleod and Heath, canvassing for the local Conservative constituency association must have provoked no great *crise de conscience*.

The truth was that, after a quarter of a century's solid slog, Dad and his fellow-rankers at OCTU had finally made it: senior management status, or the equivalent—a permanent posting at Civvy Street's equivalent of Staff HQ. These "temporary gentlemen", their wartime aspirations finally fulfilled, at last felt confident enough to embrace the present. The War was still there, but not in the same pervasive fashion. Affluence and achievement—if not necessarily ambition—were of paramount importance. For a few short, middle-aged years, such men could rest content.

Kurt Schwitters in Ambleside

A thousand miles (and how much more in taste?)
From art's apostasy in Hanover
Where Dada anarchy fired your youth, is
The green-slate gable, blue-stone guest-house air
Of Ambleside, its streets austere, sedate.
You lived your last years here, compelled, for cash,
To paint the local burghers. They, you said,
"Don't like to see the brush strokes". What a clash!

At first, the finished portraits hung here seem
Conventional. But look at them close to:
Dark skeins, odd blues and eerie whites, sharp fleck
And scumble-whorl—the fire! The restless drive!
The young man's eye, compelling, still shines through.
Old burgher heads, but so distinct, alive!

S. E. G. Curtis

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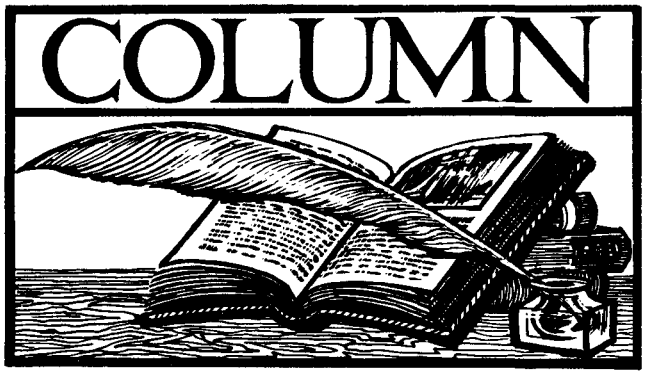

THE MICROPHONE was the biggest I've ever seen. It stood a foot high on the table, a slightly rubbed dark-brown statue, the slab casing of the diaphragm pierced with small holes like a bar of aerated chocolate. It had no electric lead: it was there merely as a memento—of the model General de Gaulle had used when he broadcast to France from London during World War II. We were there in that same studio in Bush House, the overseas section of the BBC.

We? A rather motley half-dozen: Frenchmen and French-speaking Britons, gathered to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of *la France libre*. FR3, the third French television channel, had organised a live broadcast from London, to be interspersed with old wartime newsreels. Our job was to reminisce and reflect.

The star of the show was Maurice Schumann, 79 years old now, but still burly and energetic, and still endowed with the rich dark voice that so successfully pierced the Nazi jamming. Off air, he recalled an incident from the Liberation, when he had gone back to France with the Allied troops. Reaching his old home town, he had paid a sentimental visit to the house he had grown up in, long since sold. "Oh, you *must* go and see my mother", said the woman who now lived there; "though you'll have to shout—she's rather hard of hearing." He did: but he couldn't make her understand, so he scribbled a note, with his name, on a piece of paper. The old lady read it—and threw her arms round him. "I used to listen to you every night", she said.

Another veteran told a story he thought might be apocryphal. The son of one village family was in the Resistance, but had gone missing, and was presumed dead. His parents went to the *curé* to organise a memorial service. Everyone in the village was invited. Then, two days before the service, the parents had a wonderful surprise. Listening in secret to London, they heard their son's voice. He had escaped to England. They gave a heartfelt prayer of thanks. But what about the memorial service? They could hardly cancel it, because the authorities would want to know where their news came from—and tuning in to London was a very serious offence. So they decided to go through the motions and attend the service as if nothing had happened. But when they got to the church, it was deserted. Everyone else was a clandestine listener too.

The presenter flown in from Paris to chair the programme was far too young to have such memories of his own. He studied the guests' faces as they watched the 1940 newsreels. "I saw you: you were moved", he said—almost in surprise. What struck him as incongruous, I suspect, was the voice of the newsreel commentator, ringing, stentorian, unconquerably gung-ho. I think it was Leslie Mitchell, but others had similar tones. It took some effort to recall how natural they seemed then, with their air of stalwart cheerfulness, of all-in-it-together, of not-letting-the-side-down and putting-up-a-jolly-good-show. "These French girl volunteers are known as *le corps féminin*", said the commentator, without the ghost of a smile—although in private at the time the phrase had provoked sexist humour. There was a real wartime consensus behind slogans that now sound hollow. When Maurice Schumann pointed out that he had written his own broadcast scripts, with no daily directives from General de Gaulle, the young presenter from Paris was astonished. He was equally surprised to hear that censorship had been purely military, with no political interference. He would have been still more astounded to hear how chaotic it all had been in those early, desperate, defiant days and nights.

This year being the centenary of General de Gaulle's birth, all sorts of books about him have appeared in Paris. Some are in the dread "Wit and Wisdom" category, but others are far more scholarly. And quite by chance, not knowing about the FR3 programme I was to be involved in, I'd picked up a small neat volume by a husband-and-wife team of *agrégés d'histoire*, Michèle and Jean-Paul Cointet, entitled *La France à Londres 1940-1943*.[1]

Jean-Paul Cointet earlier published a more general study, *La France libre*, written from what he calls "the historiographical angle".[2] In clear, this no doubt implies self-effacement, renouncing the temptation to mingle history with personal memoirs, reflections, or political prejudice. What's obvious is that both authors, like our TV presenter, are too youthful to remember the period they describe. This gives their work a certain austerity, like a debate illustrated with steel engravings; but if it lacks the warmth and colour of one's own recollections, it gains immensely in objectivity.

WHAT THE COINTETS have sought to do, in fact, is to demythologise a controversial and still highly emotional chapter in French and European history. They tilt in particular at the tendency "to discern, in retrospect, an implacable line of destiny and faith which leads from June 17, 1940, to the triumphal parade on the Champs-Elysées in 1944". Admittedly, this legend is less prevalent now than in the General's heyday as President; but in a profession whose task is to discover the past and then impose patterns on it, some historians at least should set out to recreate the disorder and uncertainty, the suspense and anxiety, the haste and effort and ignorance that actually making history entails. What emerges from *La France à Londres* is a kind of ping-pong match that only later, in memoirs and hagiography, was made to look like a chess game.

It was a gamble from the start. "The departure of General

[1] Michèle and Jean-Paul Cointet, *La France à Londres 1940-1943* (Editions Complexe, 1990).

[2] Jean-Paul Cointet, *La France libre* (Presses Universitaires de France, 1975).

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de Gaulle for London in June 1940", write the Cointets, "however extraordinary it may seem to those more susceptible to myth than to history, to the result of an event than to its explanation, was quite normal and understandable." Yes indeed: but remember the confusion. Remember Britain's agreement to release France from her alliance obligations *at the same time* as offering Franco-British union—a mistake hastily rectified by a "chaser" telegram when those offering union discovered the agreement. Remember Jean Monnet's and René Pleven's last attempt to salvage the union plan by flying to the French Government, by then in Bordeaux, after both de Gaulle and Churchill had concluded, sadly, that it would be refused. They flew out in a Sunderland, big enough to lift off the entire French Cabinet; in the event, they flew back with refugees. Remember the uncertainty about de Gaulle's role. "Are you here on mission?" Mme Monnet asked him. "No, Madame", he answered, "I am here to save the honour of France." Remember the disputes about what base to use for the purpose—Monnet proposing North Africa, de Gaulle opting for Britain. Remember those like Raymond Aron, who thought for a time some deal might be done with Pétain. And remember how relatively few, in the first summer months after the French *débâcle*, either listened to de Gaulle's broadcasts or, in London, rallied to his cause.

SOME OF these points the Cointets make, very convincingly. They show how slowly the junior General became the future President, and what hurdles stood in his path. He had to face not only lack of funds, but also British reticence; not only Roosevelt's suspicions, but Churchill's subordinate role in the US alliance; not only the paucity of his own armed forces, but also potential rivals or grudging colleagues. Above all, he lacked a political constituency. Condemned by the Vichy régime, he had no electoral base in France. Only when Jean Moulin had formed the *Conseil National de la Résistance* as an umbrella organisation for the various Resistance movements, and secured its allegiance to de Gaulle, was the General at last able to claim that he had the backing of metropolitan France. Then and only then was he able and willing to go to North Africa to work with—and outwit—Roosevelt's preferred French General, the courageous but politically callow Henri Giraud. No doubt it was necessary to unite the French Resistance, if only to prevent *double emploi* and to forestall post-War dissension. But the arrest and death of Jean Moulin, which followed the *Conseil*'s ill-fated meeting at Caluire, were a heavy price for political advantage, and one not always linked—in orthodox accounts—with de Gaulle's obvious interest in the affair.

As a feat of historical analysis, full of cool rigour, the Cointets' book is remarkable. Without setting the revisionist cat among the pious pigeons, it gently restores the balance among conflicting theses, and recreates the options available to the main actors while remaining fair to each. The only thing missing is the *feel* of the period. Some historians might dismiss that as irrelevant: but anyone who lived through the events in question will hunger for more.

Memoirs are one source of such nourishment; but on this particular subject the most revealing account I've read looks at first like one of those pseudo-indiscreet French scandal books that used to be so popular: it even has "MOST SECRET" (in English) on its cover page. This is *Histoire Secrète des Français à Londres de 1940 à 1944* by André Gillois, a novelist, playwright, and popular historian who worked with the Resistance in the first years after the Armistice, came to London in 1942, and eventually replaced Maurice Schumann at the microphone—by then as spokesman of the Provisional Government.[3]

DESPITE its catchpenny title, Gillois's book is based on considerable research, including interviews with a number of informants now passed on. It hardly pretends to be a work of historiography; but it conveys the atmosphere of wartime London, and the "*grenouillage*" of the various services, as well as any novel—even Piers Paul Read's work of clever reconstruction, *The Free Frenchman*.[4] Anyone wanting to recapture the absurdities and excitements of that period, let alone its frustrations and tragedies, could do worse than read Gillois's racy, gossipy, partisan pages.

Nor are they partisan only for General de Gaulle. What springs from them—as from conversations with other survivors from the period—is an extraordinary warmth of feeling towards Britain and the British.

> "They welcomed us so fraternally [wrote Gillois] that one felt almost ashamed to want to leave. For four years, the French had felt at home in London, because the British insisted that they should. We had the impression of taking up a lot of room because they wanted to give us that feeling. Perhaps they were always afraid of not seeming friendly enough, of appearing to reproach us for having been so few."

I don't think that was it. My impression was that the British feared the Free French would be lonely—partly because, for a crucial time in the War, the British were alone too. Of course, there were famous quarrels, and no wonder. I remember my mother, fresh from a luncheon addressed by the General, throwing off her coat and exclaiming: "He's appallingly proud." But despite it all, the comradeship forged in those War years was genuine. Among the veterans, it still endures.

But time passes, and things change. Shortly before our commemorative broadcast, I was in Paris interviewing friends and august contacts to compile a radio programme around the Dublin "summit" of the European Community, at which France and Germany proposed studying "political union"—a phrase which Britain found hard to construe. Everywhere I went, from the Elysée Palace to the main political parties, and from industry to *Sciences-Po.*, I seemed to be warmly welcomed, but was struck by the same unvary-

[3] André Gillois, *Histoire Secrète des Français à Londres de 1940 à 1944* (Hachette, 1973).
[4] Piers Paul Read, *The Free Frenchman* (Secker & Warburg/ Alison Press, 1986).

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ing attitude to Britain. It was friendly, and in some cases echoed the fraternity of wartime; yet it had a touch of wistfulness, disappointment, and even irritation too.

France and Germany, as everyone knows, are long since reconciled: if nothing else, the European Community has seen to that. But the new Germany of East and West united will be a very large partner; and many in France are concerned not to be outweighed. Their quite proper reaction is to want to strengthen the European Community—complete its single market, improve and democratise its institutions, and extend its purview to foreign policy, security, and defence. Fortunately, Chancellor Kohl sees eye-to-eye with them: hence the joint Kohl-Mitterrand proposal at the Dublin "summit". Yet some people in France still look longingly across the Channel, wishing that somehow the British Government could be persuaded to endorse the same ideas. Some even hanker after a revival of the old Franco-British entente and the comradeship of the early 1940s. It seems a great pity to disappoint them.

Britain and France, after all, have so much in common that it blinds them to their mutual similarity. Both emerged quite early in the Middle Ages; both, in differing degrees, were separate from the Empire and the Pope. Each speaks a language it secretly feels to be *the* language, a sensible *Ursprache* of which all others are translations. Each, less secretly, regards its own literature as supreme. Both are former enemies and trade rivals that came to respect each other's prowess. Both were until recently colonial powers. Each has its own small nuclear deterrent. Both are highly centralised democracies, with first-rate civil services. Both somewhat begrudge the economic power of Germany, Japan, and the United States. Both officially try to resist "Americanisation", while the peoples of both embrace it with reckless haste.

Alike in so many ways, the French and the British find mutual understanding difficult—partly because both are reluctant to explore their own proud psyches. But there is another handicap: reluctance to learn each other's language. And watch out, Britain. That too is changing, not always to British advantage.

Periodically France twitches, as it were, with Francophonia. President Mitterrand has organised *colloques* of French-speaking countries; and the Academy still tries to outlaw linguistic invaders like "*le talkie-walkie*"—already, one might have thought, badly deformed. But whereas the British have only a few incentives to learn French in preference to German, Russian, Spanish, or Chinese, the French see a vast, rich English-speaking world around them, colonising the language of high technology, telecommunications, advertising, science, and even sport. Being rational, they respond to it. Already, in twenty years or so, one can measure the difference. In the 1960s, making a radio programme with high-level French officials who spoke English adequately was a daunting business. Today, the task is relatively easy. English, or American-English, is becoming a *lingua franca*, even in France.

And make no mistake: language is important. W. H. Auden once memorably wrote:

> *All I have is a voice*
> *To undo the folded lie.*

That was all General de Gaulle had in June 1940. Thanks to that stately microphone, his voice prevailed.

M

Homage to Jean Rhys

At the corner table, perusing a face
In unimproving colours,
Brandy, absinthe, Cinzano,

Latticed by the inevitable rudeness
Of strangers, pulling
Words around her like a stole,

Shut portcullis, madame whispers
To a kind gentleman
Who has, he's afraid, to dash.

The reader peers, permitted like
A medical student.
She's forgotten him.

Swaddled tight, she'll black out
Harmlessly, unhelped:
A walking Montmartre ghost,

Ex-chorus-girl, *Anglaise*,
Vieille, ex-ex.
No one can get in or out.

Anne Rouse

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Three Poems by György Petri

Sisyphus Steps Back

The age of intrepid idiots is upon us.
Fools or knaves? They're both at the same time.
I'm scared of understanding, and yet I laugh at it:
you can't stop a boulder once it's rolling back.

Cemetery Plot No. 301

Let everything stay as it is!
With the carcasses from the Zoo?
Why, yes. Was their fate any different?
Was hanging any kinder than putting to sleep?
I cannot forget (when I say this,
I don't mean to threaten: it's the way I am:
I'm not able to forget).

On the other hand, what would I wish
for myself if I'd been—ha-ha!—hanged?
if I were to come back as a Stone Guest?
I'd wish at long last to be left in peace.
I shit on reverence. To these men
more mercy should've been shown when they were alive
(they should've been left alive). Now it's too late.

Against death there is no *remedium*.
No compensation for widows,
orphans, nations. I'm not interested
in the hangman's mate and his belated tears.
My eyes are dry. I need them for looking with.

Though actually there isn't much
to see—only, in the dusk
everything gets sharper:
a female body, a branch,
the downs of your face. I don't want
anything. Just to keep looking, no more.

NOTE: *In 1958, when Imre Nagy and his fellow leaders were hanged, they were buried in a plot of ground on the outskirts of Budapest. This was Cemetery Plot No. 301. Last year, on the anniversary of their execution, the bodies were exhumed and reburied, and memorials were placed on the previously unmarked graves. It was found, when the graves were opened, that the bones of animals from the nearby zoo had been buried along with them.*

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If

If the ambitious articled clerk from Simbirsk
had played chess more on Capri with Maxim Gorki
and had listened more to the *Appassionata*,
and, oh yes, if—for he had mused thereon—
he would rather have stroked
than struck,
if he had lost himself in gawping endlessly
at the miracle of Geneva's Central Post Office
(no mind of provincial government could light
upon a thing more admirable), why then . . .
perhaps there would've been
some trite Kerenskian alternative:
less refrigerstated revolution,
more survivors.

Translated from the Hungarian
by Clive Wilmer and George Gömöri

Martin Reed

Mr Fox

The night I heard the scream, a mad girl's cry,
I thought it was an animal nearby.

He slept. The poor lamb always got back late,
Exhausted, working for the place. I'd wait

In our converted barn, or down beside
The garages, one shut, one open wide

For his return. I thought he hadn't heard
But when I moved towards the door, he stirred.

"What is it pet, has something got the cat?"
I loathed it when he talked to me like that,

As if to emphasise my difference
From his first, her dead Magnificence.

Outside, the fields oozed mud. Black silks of cloud
Were brushed across the grey. The wind grew loud.

I walked between the ditches and the wood
Towards the mere where watchful Friesians stood,

Their warm breath welcoming. They nuzzled round.
I felt my bare feet soak in dewy ground.

Beneath the grass, warm peat was mouldering.
Wind skimmed the sea; Brent Knoll was shouldering

A darkening slab of storm; rain pinned me down.
I wondered if he'd care were I to drown

And felt the scream again, inside my head,
Back in the dusty room, within his bed.

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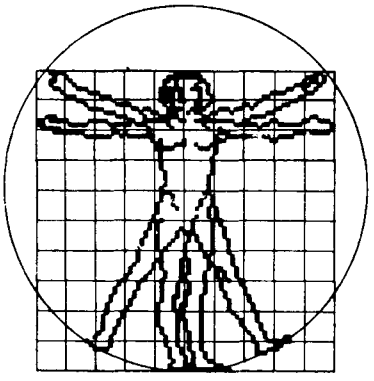
The Resurgence of Pessimistic Pragmatism

Charles Peirce's Legacy—By LEWIS S. FEUER



ACCORDING TO John Dewey, the pragmatic philosophy arising in America as the expression of its open frontier and its business civilisation offered to many men an open universe with indeterminate futures. "It is beyond doubt", he wrote, "that the progressive and unstable character of American life and civilisation has facilitated the birth of a philosophy which regards the world as being in continuous formation, where there is still place for indeterminism, for the new and for a real future."

To both William James and John Dewey, the existence of never-ending open possibilities of novel events, experiences, and social structures was the philosophical basis for belief in human progress. When the constraining hand of determinism was removed, and the tenet of open choices among novel routes affirmed, then American optimism rested on a cosmic ground at least as firm as that of Germanic pessimism. Pragmatism has thus been regarded as the philosophical counterpart of the optimistic, expanding, democratic, American civilisation.

As the young William James put it eloquently in 1875, ". . . the existence of a Walt Whitman confounds Schopenhauer as the existence of a Leopardi refutes Dr Pangloss". James obviously had not read Walt Whitman's descriptions of how Confederate and Union soldiers massacred each other: "Multiply the above by scores, aye hundreds—and verify it in all the forms . . .—light it with every lurid passion . . . and you have an inkling of this war."[1]

The linkage between the pragmatic principle and the notion of an expanding, advancing civilisation—whether that of an industrial or a frontier society—is, however, scarcely a logical or necessary one. (Indeed, the frontier experience was frequently less one of open alternatives than that of a harsh, cruel setting, as Josiah Royce, Bret Harte, and Mark Twain recorded.[2]) The two ideas are, in the language of Arthur O. Lovejoy, the analytic historian of ideas, separate and independent unit-ideas. If the social universe were one of diminishing resources, declining possibilities, vanishing of novel forms, and retrogression to less complex institutions as well as a more backward technology, the validity of the pragmatic philosophy would not be lessened. An association of the pragmatic philosophy with a pessimistic outlook toward the human prospect could be as valid for the 21st century as that with optimism was for William James at the onset of the 20th century, as he watched the San Francisco earthquake.

Moreover, the pragmatic movement was probably less the product of an open-frontier universe than an articulation of what Alexis de Tocqueville called "the philosophical method of the American":

> "I think in no country in the civilised world is less attention paid to philosophy than in the United States. The Americans have no philosophical school of their own, and they care but little for all the schools into which Europe is divided, the very names of which are scarcely known to them."

LEWIS FEUER *is Emeritus University Professor at the University of Virginia. Among his many books are "Psychoanalysis and Ethics" (1955), "Marx and the Intellectuals" (1969), "Ideology and the Ideologists" (1975), and most recently "Imperialism and the Anti-Imperialist Mind" (Prometheus Books, 1988). A Festschrift, "Philosophy, History and Social Action: Essays in Honor of Lewis Feuer", edited by Sidney Hook, William L. O'Neill, and Roger O'Toole, was presented to him in 1988 by his friends and former students. His articles in* ENCOUNTER *include "The Case of the Darwin-Marx Letter" (October 1978), "Ideology & No End" (April 1973), and "Confronting Evil & Its Unreason" (May 1988).*

[1] John Dewey, "The Development of American Pragmatism", in *Studies in the History of Ideas"* edited by the Department of Philosophy of Columbia University (New York, 1925), vol. II, p. 374. William James, "German Pessimism", in *Collected Essays and Reviews,* New York, 1920, p. 17. Walt Whitman, "A Glimpse of War's Hell-Scenes", from *Specimen Days,* in Maxwell Geisman (eds.), *The Whitman Reader* (New York, 1955), pp. 306-309.

[2] The cowboy, celebrated in later folklore and films, was a pathetically underpaid proletarian who in his solitariness under the skies was apt to become eccentric or insane. See David Lavender, *One Man's West* (New York, 1943); Edward and Eleanor Marx Aveling, *The Working-Class Movement in America* (2nd ed., London, 1891; reprinted New York, 1969), pp. 154-165; Philip Ashton Rollins, *The Cowboy: An Unconventional History of Civilisation on the Old-Time Cattle Range* (New York, 1936), pp. 65-67; Ramon F. Adams, ed., *The Best of the American Cowboy* (Norman, Oklahoma, 1957), p. 6.

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Yet curiously, added Tocqueville, almost all the Americans "use their minds in the same manner", and "have a philosophical method common to the whole people". All tried to:

> ". . . evade the bondage of system and habit, of family maxims, class opinions, and . . . national prejudice; to accept tradition only as a means of information . . . ; to seek the reason of things for oneself, and in oneself alone; to tend to results . . . ."[3]

This anti-philosophical philosophy of the Americans coincided in large part with the pragmatic principle as Charles Peirce first defined it.

PEIRCE—BORN 150 YEARS AGO, in September 1839—was the pioneer in associating pragmatism with pessimism, in formulating what we might call "a pragmatic pessimism". In the first place, he did not regard truth-discovery as necessarily or generally contributing to the *advancement* of the human race's chances for survival. To be sure, John Dewey, in his first formulation of his experimental logic, regarded the experimental method as having originated and been continued because of its contribution to the successful struggle of human organisms with their environment. At the outset, however, Peirce conceded that the discovery of truths might also tend to *diminish* the human species' chances of survival. Truths concerning themselves and their universe might conceivably impel people to destroy themselves, yet the scientist's devotion to their discovery would still hold him compulsively:

> "But let the consequences of such a belief [having a possible atheistical issue] be as dire as they may, one thing is certain: that the state of facts, whatever it may be, will surely get found out, and no human prudence can long arrest the triumphal car of truth—no, not if the discovery were such as to drive every individual of our race to suicide!"[4]

In other words, from Peirce's standpoint, the mutations toward scientific reasoning that arose in the course of man's biological evolution, contributing toward his more successful nutrition and reproduction, might also eventuate in the discovery of such truths concerning himself, his fellows, and his universe that a will to collective self-destruction might prevail.

IT IS CURIOUS that such thoughts of a self-destructive outcome as the collective consequence of man's advancement in science and technology affected the leaders of British empiricist thought in the 19th century. John Stuart Mill at the end of 1854, watching Italian peasants dying of hunger, wondered if "there was a conspiracy among the powers of nature to thwart human industry" and finally starve the human race. He wondered what would happen if the corn crop were blighted: "I think", he wrote, "that should be a signal for the universal and simultaneous suicide of the human race . . . . In the meantime", he added in a provisional optimism to his wife, "let us make what we can of what human life we have got . . . ."[5]

Meanwhile, the workings of sociological law, according to Mill, tended toward the dominance of mediocrity and bureaucracy; the revolutionary socialism toward which he inclined when young seemed to him finally to be impelled by a cruel hatred of individual liberty.

Herbert Spencer, the philosopher of evolution, had as early as his thirties reached the conclusion that life was not worth living, though his friends George Henry Lewes and George Eliot were shocked when he told them so. He never changed his mind on this point, and toward the end of his life told his friend and quondam literary executor Beatrice Webb, the foremost Fabian socialist woman: "If pessimism means that you would rather not have lived, then I am a pessimist."[6] By that time, however, Spencer had arrived at a sociological pessimism: that is, one grounded in sociological law rather than on his personal exhaustion with, or repugnance toward, human beings.

Spencer believed that a rhythmic movement toward social retrogression was manifesting itself in the wave of "re-barbarisation" that was under way. Brutality was spreading throughout society, he concluded, as he recorded his observations:

> ". . . the literature of the periodicals reeks with violence . . . men overpowered . . . , daggers raised, pistols levelled—these, in all varieties of combination, have appealed to our latent savagery."

The socialistic administrations helped to power by the Fabian intellectuals would, according to Spencer, inaugurate a new despotism; the worst traits of human nature—love of power, selfishness, injustice, untruthfulness—that were partially restrained by the institutions of private society, would become "irresistible" in a socialist system; a "disciplined army of civil officials" would engender with successive generations "evils far greater and less remediable".[7]

Now, by and large, Charles Peirce shared the sociological pessimism of Spencer and Mill. Though he acknowledged an emotional sympathy with the French Revolutionary "sentimentalists", he expected that the social revolution in the

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[3] Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (1835, 1840), tr. Henry Reeve, rev. Francis Bowen, ed. Phillips Bradley (New York, 1945), vol. II, pp. 3-4.

[4] C. S. Peirce, "Illustrations of the Logic of Science: Fifth Paper—The Order of Nature", *The Popular Science Monthly,* vol. 13 (June 1878), p. 216. Reprinted in Charles S. Peirce, *Chance, Love, and Logic: Philosophical Essays,* ed. Morris R. Cohen (New York, 1923), pp. 129-30.

[5] F. A. Hayek, *John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor: Their Correspondence and Subsequent Marriage* (Chicago, 1951), p. 214.

[6] Hugh Elliot, *Herbert Spencer* (New York, 1917), pp. 46-47. Herbert Spencer had appointed Beatrice Potter as his literary executor, but then sorrowfully rescinded that decision after she married the Fabian Socialist Sidney Webb. Beatrice Webb, *My Apprenticeship* (1926, Penguin, 1938), vol. I, p. 53.

[7] Herbert Spencer, *Facts and Comments* (New York, 1902), pp. 172-73, 185-87; also David Duncan, *Life and Letters of Herbert Spencer* (1908), vol. II, pp. 137. Herbert Spencer, "The Coming Slavery" (1884), reprinted in Herbert Spencer, *The Man versus the State,* ed. Donald G. MacRae (Penguin, 1969), pp. 108-109.

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20th century would far exceed the cruelties attained by the French Reign of Terror:

> "The twentieth century, in its latter half, shall surely see the deluge-tempest burst upon the social order—to clear upon a world as deep in ruin as that greed—philosophy has long plunged it into guilt. No post-thermidorian high-jinks then!"

In June 1894, the following year, many Americans indeed thought social revolution loomed when President Grover Cleveland called out the Federal troops to quell the strikers of the American Railway Union, led by Eugene V. Debs, against all the railroad companies operating through Chicago; trains stood immobilised, locomotives were de-railed, tracks were torn up, as violent battles raged in the railroad yards.

To Lady Victoria Welby, in 1908, Peirce elaborated on the character of the retrogressive era, "going back relatively to the Dark Ages", that he believed was in the offing for American and English civilisation. ". . . we [Americans]", wrote Peirce:

> "have constantly experienced, and felt but too keenly, the ruinous effects of universal suffrage and weakly exercised government. Here are the labor-organisations, into whose hands we are delivering the government, clamoring today for the 'right' to persecute and kill people as they please. We are making them a ruling class; and England is going to do the same thing. It will be a healthful revolution; for when the lowest class insists on enslaving the upper class, as they are insisting, and that is just what their intention is, and the upper class is so devoid of manhood as to permit it, clearly that will be a revolution by the grace of God; and I only hope that when they get the power they won't be so weak as to let it slip from their hands. Of course it will mean going back relatively to the Dark Ages."

This time, Peirce hoped, "the governing class" would use common sense to maintain their rule, and not be enthralled, as the 18th-century revolutionary rationalists were, by "the hedonist delusion". For, according to Peirce, those captivated by such 18th-century notions as, presumably, the purported inalienable right to the pursuit of happiness, "will find they spell revolution of the most degrading kind".

Indeed, Peirce had become disenchanted with the egalitarian-minded liberals:

> "[Nothing] can appear to me sillier than rationalism; and folly in politics cannot go further than English liberalism. The people ought to be enslaved; only the slaveholders ought to practice the virtues that alone can maintain their rule. England will discover too late that it has sapped the foundations of culture."[8]

In short, Peirce saw none of the relationships between pragmatism and democracy that John Dewey tried to elaborate. His pessimistic outlook was that of someone who felt himself living in a closing, contracting society, with diminishing resources and declining opportunities. His socio-political pessimism was based in part on his belief that under a proletarian democracy a tyranny would prevail against scientists and intellectuals, marking a return, relatively, to the Dark Ages.

HE INTERPRETED his pessimism as a theorem derivable from the theory of probabilities. Every society must finally break down—not because of the sociological laws peculiar to that society, but because, since every society is an organised conglomeration of physical entities, the physical shufflings that are its history must in the long run involve the decay, downfall, or disintegration of that improbable organisation into more probable, mixed-up, aggregates.

In the long run—according to the theory of probabilities as Peirce conceives it—since the direction of social historic change must be from the improbable to the probable, it follows an evolution from the organised society to the more disorganised:

> "All human affairs rest upon probabilities. If man were immortal, he could be perfectly sure of seeing the day when everything in which he had trusted should betray his trust, and, in short, of coming eventually to hopeless misery. He would break down, at last, as every good fortune, as every dynasty, as every civilisation does. In place of this we have death."[9]

IT IS DOUBTFUL whether any social scientist would now regard Peirce's probabilistic basis for pessimism as convincing. For Peirce, in effect, assumes that human societies are analogous to conglomerations of molecules randomly bumping and colliding with each other, and that their histories are therefore derivable from statistical laws in a way similar to Rudolf Clausius's derivation of the second law of thermodynamics. But in social history we are dealing with men who act in accordance with laws of motivation, conflict, and cooperation, with drives of sexuality, power-seeking, and economic gain operating beside the emergent varieties of conduct, from the pursuit of scientific research to that of ascetic withdrawal.

If God were a shuffler of persons, like a gambler shuffling his deck of cards, Peirce's probabilistic argument for pessimism might have some ground, though he suppresses the equiprobable alternative that every logically possible Utopia would be realised; certainly Utopias should have an equiprobable status with Dystopias. And indeed, if Peirce's later

[8] Charles S. Peirce, "Evolutionary Love", *The Monist,* vol. III (January 1893), p. 181; *Chance, Love and Logic,* p. 274. Irwin C. Lieb, *Charles S. Peirce's Letters to Lady Welby* (New Haven, 1953), p. 28, reprinted in Charles S. Peirce, *Selected Writings: Values in a Universe of Chance*, ed., Philip Paul Wiener (New York, 1958, reprinted 1966), p. 402.

[9] Cited in Charles S. Peirce, *Chance, Love and Logic,* p. 72. C. S. Peirce, "Illustrations of the Logic of Science: Third Paper, the Doctrine of Chances", *The Popular Science Monthly,* vol. 12 (March 1878), p. 610. Peirce at this time was already recognised by such a mathematician as William Kingdon Clifford as "the greatest living logician". See John Fiske, *Edward Livingston Youmans: Interpreter of Science for the People* (New York, 1894), p. 340.

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metaphysics has any genuine validity, the progressive emergence of a Utopian order is the likeliest direction of human events. For, according to Peirce, the ultimate law of existence is that an energising reasonableness of law tends to spread itself throughout all entities, replacing the primordial chaos with the rule of law. This he regarded as the ultimate law of laws.[10]

AT TIMES, too, Peirce seems to suggest—as John Dewey did more emphatically in his later writings at Chicago—that the *pragmatic* logic is a kind of corollary of Darwin's theory of natural selection. That the two are in fact independent unit-ideas is clear, however, from a simple consideration. The *experimental* logic would still remain valid even if its use had resulted in the contravening of Darwin's theory. Thus, if Charles Darwin had discovered during his voyage on the *Beagle* that species had evolved very definitely in different directions even on islands where there was no tendency to overpopulation, with its consequent struggle for existence, that finding would in no way have affected the validity of scientific verification or falsification.

Curiously, Peirce never seems to have confronted the underlying threat to scientific, industrial civilisation that his fellow logician, William Stanley Jevons, had posed for Britain in 1865. In that year, Jevons—the founder of British mathematical economics—published a book called *The Coal Question,* which dared, in the midst of the Victorian expansion, to raise the question as to whether Britain might soon see its coal reserves dwindle, and its industrial civilisation decline. Within 100 years, Jevons argued from his extrapolations, Britain's rate of consumption would have seriously depleted its coal reserves. Jevons feared for the future of his country, though he hesitated "at asserting things so little accordant", as he said, "with the unbounded confidence of the present day." But this, he added, was a question of "almost religious importance".[11]

John Stuart Mill grasped at once the tremendous seriousness of Jevons's analysis. Mill, with his constitutional pessimism, could not subscribe to the technological optimism of Sir William Robert Grove, President in 1866 of the British Association for the Advancement of Science. Drawing comfort from the law of conservation of energy, Grove asserted cheerfully that new reservoirs of heat and force that were technologically practicable would be discovered, "before the coal-fields are exhausted . . . we may with confidence rely on invention being in this case, as in others, born of necessity, when the necessity arises".

It is true that William James later made it central to his pragmatic optimism to affirm that rewards, whether to the lover or the retail storekeeper, are given to him who has emotional confidence in the outcome. Mill, however (he was then serving his one term as an elected Member of Parliament), rose in the House of Commons to tell them of Jevons's book. He had read, he told the House, "the various attempts to answer Mr Jevons", but, at most, they succeeded only in adding "a few years longer" to the probable economic lifetime of the coal mines, and he pleaded for a sense of responsibility to posterity in terms so selfless that they seemed to transcend his utilitarian ethics.

When Jevons—who disagreed with many of Mill's views on logic—heard of Mill's speech, he was deeply affected: "What is this poor mind of mine with all its wavering hopes and fears, that its thoughts should be quoted and approved by a great philosopher in the parliament of so great a nation?"

NOW JEVONS, LIKE PEIRCE, was slowly grasping at a general theme: that industrial and scientific advance, at certain stages in human evolution, was potentially self-destructive for the human race. The postulate that from Francis Bacon to Benjamin Franklin and later John Dewey had affirmed the uniform convergence between science-seeking and welfare-advancement was being shaken as replaceable by a scientific pessimism.

In the cases of both Jevons and Peirce, personal circumstances and character traits probably contributed much to the pessimistic cast or pessimistic sensitivity of their philosophies. According to John Maynard Keynes, Jevons's conclusions concerning the depletion of the British coal reserves arose in large part from "a psychological trait, unusually strong in him, which many other people share, a certain hoarding instinct, a readiness to be alarmed and excited by the idea of the exhaustion of resources".[12] Keynes, however, with his Cambridge Apostolic morality, was perhaps too easily contemptuous of the reasoning of such chapel-type personalities as W. S. Jevons and Woodrow Wilson. Moreover, both the latter had had direct experiences of poverty and men's misery that were alien to the background of the Cambridge Apostles' Circle.[13]

Jevons was indeed haunted by fear—of a pending scarcity of paper. He therefore stockpiled such a huge reserve of writing and packing paper that more than a half-century after his death his children were still using its stores. And his

[10] "Every evolutionism must in its evolution eventually restore that rejected idea of law as a reasonableness energising in the world (no matter through what mechanism of natural selection or otherwise) . . . ." C. S. Peirce, "The Laws of Nature and Hume's Argument against Miracles", *Selected Writings,* p. 300.

[11] Jevons showed with his statistical evidence that ". . . if our consumption of coal continues to multiply for one hundred and ten years, at the same rate as hitherto, the total amount of coal consumed in the interval will be one hundred thousand millions of tons". Estimating the available coal in Britain at only 83 thousands of millions of tons within a depth of 4,000 feet, Jevons was led to conclude: ". . . we cannot long maintain our present increase of consumption . . . the check to our progress must become perceptible considerably, within a century from the present time." W. Stanley Jevons, *The Coal Question: An Inquiry Concerning the Progress of the Nation, and the Probable Exhaustion of our Coal-Mines* (2nd, revised, ed., London, 1866), pp. 241-42, 12, 13.

[12] See George Basalla, William Coleman, and Robert H. Kargon (eds), *Victorian Science* (New York), pp. 95-96. *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates,* Third Series, vol. CLXXXII (London, 1866), 12 March 1866-26 April 1866, pp. 1,524-28. W. Stanley Jevons, *Pure Logic and Other Minor Works,* ed. Robert A. Adamson and Harriet A. Jevons. (London, 1890). p. 202. John Maynard Keynes, *Essays in Biography* (New York, 1933). p. 266.

[13] See Paul Levy, *Moore: G. E. Moore and the Cambridge Apostles* (London, 1979).

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nature was certainly pervaded by gloom; having grown up virtually without friends or acquaintances, mostly isolated by his own choice, he was so shy that in later years he still trembled before his lecture-classes. Like Thomas Hardy's Jude Fawley, he felt that his family was "under certain curses"; he was so self-deprecatory that he averred he "should feel utterly wretched if I knew another to think me better than I was". He felt he was seeing mankind at its dominant lowest when he witnessed the Australian gold rush of 1859, with the camps to which some 30,000 diggers had been drawn within a month like iron filings to a magnet, among them "swarms of Chinese . . . ugly little Mongolians . . . ." Happily he found a job at the Melbourne Observatory helping to chart the Southern stars.[14]

More tragically, his fellow logician Charles Peirce, in his own self-torment, told President Daniel C. Gilman at the Johns Hopkins University that his physician feared "that the state of my brain was alarming" and that he might become "something like" insane. The nature of Peirce's neurosis might be partially suggested by the unusual fact that Peirce attached to his name an additional one—"Santiago"—evidently re-christening himself in gratitude to William James. What James thought of this act of psychological identification is not thus far recorded, though he probably would have been seriously troubled by a Freudian diagnosis.

PEIRCE'S FATHER, Benjamin, moreover, evinced a strange cruelty toward his son. "I was forced to think hard and continuously", recalled Charles Peirce: "My father would sometimes make me sit up all night playing double dummy till sunrise without relaxing my attention." Though a transcendentalist, Benjamin Peirce had been "vehemently opposed to the abolitionists", and was not displeased when his student, Thomas Wentworth Higginson, was sent to jail.[15] Charles Peirce never served in the Union Army, nor does he seem to have mentioned Lincoln or the Civil War or the slavery issue in all his writings.

A Schopenhauerian component entered Peirce's thinking as his pessimism developed. He veered toward Schopenhauer's view of a dominant Unconscious Will, and speculated that "God probably has no consciousness". When he was much younger, his pessimism had expressed itself in a certain allegiance to the ontological atheism of Etienne Vacherot, the positivist historian of the Alexandrian School: ". . . it does seem to me", Peirce wrote, "that the spirit of science is hostile to any religion except such one as that of M. Vacherot." As an ontological atheist, Vacherot argued that a Perfect Being was necessarily non-existent; but the idea of God, added Peirce, could still fill one with adoration, even though he realised that the adored one was absent from the universe. Later, when he regarded God as probably existent, though unconscious, the whole "problem of evil" became for Peirce an unfathomable mystery, a "blasphemous" search "to define the purposes of the Most High . . . ."

MEANWHILE the social future of mankind continued to fill Peirce with a pessimistic apprehension. When he listed the leading ideas of the 19th century (29 of them), although scientific ones were the majority, "Labor Unions" and "Socialism" and "Sewing Machine" were also included. As he wrote to Lady Welby in 1908, labour unions, reaching for an arbitrary power for persecuting and punishing people, were in his view the precursors of the new Dark Ages. Despite his own cosmology of an energising reasonableness spreading its laws or habits throughout the universe, Peirce acknowledged that ". . . even if there be a general march of events and ideas, the pessimists have heaped up solid arguments going to show that march ultimately brings up the nothingness from which it set out".[16]

Peirce, however, continued to seek inspiration from the history of science and its benefactions for humanity, for withstanding the scientific pessimists. He regarded the simultaneous discovery of the anaesthetic use of ether by "three different New England physicians" as the effect of a growing philanthropic spirit. Agapic influences, the ripening of sensitivity, or sentimentalism, the philanthropic spirit, were among Peirce's energising reasonable ideas; that, he argued, was why ether, hitherto used for Punchinello entertainment, had been recruited for the diminishing of human physical pain.

This was a beautiful application of his metaphysics to the history of science, but it was probably a misperception of the historical facts. The principal discoverer of the anaesthetic properties of ether, William Thomas Green Morton, was a small-town dentist much interested in making money, and "very much a man of this go-ahead age". He became so tried and tired in law suits and controversies over priority in discovery that he tried to kill himself in 1868, and did die a few hours later. A rival claimant, Horace Wells, had committed suicide twenty years earlier. Morton's teacher, Dr Charles T. Jackson—brother-in-law to Ralph Waldo Emerson—during many years pressed his own claim, evidently unfounded, for a part in the discovery of ether's humane properties; when his quest for fame proved fruitless, he declined into alcoholism and dishonesty, and finally became insane as he stood by Morton's grave.

The entertaining properties of ether, as Peirce observed, had indeed long been known to circus and travelling showmen who promoted "ether frolics" in Puritan America. At

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[14] Harriet Ann Jevons, ed., *Letters and Journal of W. Stanley Jevons* (London, 1880), p. 60. R. D. Collison Black and Rosamond Könekamp, *Papers and Correspondence of William Stanley Jevons* (London, 1972), vol. I, pp. 38, 101, 123, 127, 129.

[15] Hugh Hawkins, *Pioneer: A History of the Johns Hopkins University, 1874-1889* (Ithaca, 1960), p. 195. Ralph Barton Perry, *The Thought and Character of William James* (Boston, 1935), vol. II, p. 436. Charles S. Peirce, *Selected Writings,* p. 417. Thomas Wentworth Higginson, *Cheerful Yesterdays* (Boston, 1898; reprinted New York, 1968), p. 51.

[16] Charles Sanders Peirce, *Collected Papers,* vol. VI, p. 334. C. S. Peirce, "Illustrations of the Logic of Science, Fifth Paper: The Order of Nature", *The Popular Science Monthly,* vol. 13 (June 1878), p. 216. Charles S. Peirce, *Chance, Love and Logic,* p. 129. Charles Sanders Peirce, *Collected Papers,* vol. VI, pp. 300, 283-84. D. Parodi, "La Philosophie de Vacherot", *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale* (1899), Tome 7, pp. 468, 492-94. Charles S. Peirce, *Selected Writings,* pp. 262, 402. Ralph Barton Perry, *The Thought and Character of William James,* vol. II, p. 434.

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staid gatherings and supervised parties at which liquor was forbidden, ether could be used to achieve a brief metaquotidian voyage. A Southern claimant, Dr Crawford Long, was encouraged to his experiments in 1841 because he had seen how the use of ether at parties helped enhance the opportunities to enjoy the kisses of Southern belles. Ambition, renown, wealth, and pleasure held causal roles in the historic-scientific drama that perhaps outweighed Peirce's agapic, philanthropic spirit.[17]

THE UPSHOT OF Peirce's pessimistic sociological perspectives should have been to separate him more sharply from William James's version of pragmatism. Actually Peirce's final formulation approximated to that of James, except that it was broad enough to accommodate retrenching the terms of human existence to an historical situation of diminishing possibilities; Peirce's pragmatism allows more for a closing universe.

Peirce's first formulation in 1878 had used such ambiguous terms as "effects" and "practical bearings", of which James had availed himself:

> ". . . consider what effects, which might conceivably have practical bearings, we conceive the object of our conception to have. Then, our conception of these effects is the whole of our conception of the object."

James was quite entitled to regard the psychological "effects" of a given idea on the thinker's life as part of its "practical bearings." Peirce was perturbed by the "will to believe" that emerged, and he redrew the pragmatic principle in 1905, saying:

> ". . . if one can define accurately all the conceivable experimental phenomena which the affirmation or denial of a concept could imply, one will have therein a complete definition of the concept."

None the less, Peirce still argued that all experimental phenomena might bear on "the conduct of life". His new "pragmaticism" still retained, therefore, the terms of a moralist: ". . . pragmaticism consists in holding that the purport of any concept is its conceived bearing upon our conduct". All that was absent was James's passionate insistence on the extent to which faith can create its own verification.

Peirce had too deeply experienced personal defeat to endorse an optimistic metaphysics. His social arguments pointed toward an adaptation of pragmatism to a philosophy of wisdom in a universe that confirmed pessimist projections. However, he felt himself impelled to attack pessimists generally with *ad hominem* arguments far cruder than any which William James used. "I do not admit that pessimists are . . . thoroughly sane", he wrote. "Though the great majority of mankind are naturally optimistic", there still were, in Peirce's view, three types of pessimists. One type was made up of those who, like Leopardi, had endured some dreadful malady. A second—the misanthropes like Schopenhauer—were simply "diseased minds", while the last was mainly composed of *littérateurs*, people with lively philanthropic sympathies, "easily excited to anger at what they consider the stupid injustices of life". ". . . no individual remotely approaching the calibre of a Leibniz", added Peirce, "is to be found among them."

Those whom Peirce called "*littérateurs*" would today be called "intellectuals". Earlier he had called them "dilettanti", and, curiously, he disliked them for the same reasons Lenin had. They engaged, said Peirce, in a "very debauchery of thought"; they never wanted to settle any question, but simply to keep up an endless "literary debate" without the consummation of action which is the "only possible motive" for thinking.[18] Lenin too had excoriated the "intellectuals", who rarely wanted to make the leap from talk in discussion circles to that of revolutionary action in order to change reality.

Pessimism was for both Peirce and Lenin the philosophy of those in whom the arc from thought to act, from reflection to deed, that aimed to eliminate the problem-generating irritant, was severed or atrophied. Oddly, the world's leading intellectuals have included men of the calibre of Leibniz, and they have tried in the measure of their powers to act to influence the course of events; of such, for instance, were Einstein and Russell, and in Peirce's own time, such men as Karl Pearson and Henri Poincaré.

RATHER HARD PUT TO IT to dissociate pragmatism from a linkage to pessimism, Peirce towards the end of his life fell back upon what he called a "Neglected Argument for the Existence of God". That resolved itself into the assertion that in our free "musements" (or free reflections and associations), we find that the wonderful varieties, simplicities, and evolving growths in natural phenomena suggest to every "normal man" the hypothesis of God's Reality; and that the criterion of simplicity that we instinctively use is evidence in us of a "divinatory power".

On the other hand, Peirce simultaneously held to a theory closer to Darwin and Freud: that "all science is nothing but an outgrowth from these two instincts", namely, hunger and sexual desire, or—in his language—"the feeding impulsion" and "the satisfaction of the reproductive impulse". And there is indeed much evidence to suggest that the criterion of verification arises primarily from the patterns imposed by the hunger drive, while preferences in the formation of hypotheses, the aesthetic elements in scientific thinking, originate more intimately from variations in sexual development.

Belief in God, Peirce then adds, "overmasters every agnostic scientist" because it is backed by "the power of the passion of love", by "one's own instinct". We avoid pessimism, and confront the miseries of existence—even at times with superhuman courage, as priests among lepers—because, according to Peirce, we recognise that the heart is

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[17] Betty Macquitty, *The Battle for Oblivion: The Discovery of Anaesthesia* (London, 1969), pp. 184, 144, 78, 55, 63, 39, 47, 185. George Edmund Gifford, Jr., "Charles Thomas Jackson", *Dictionary of Scientific Biography* (New York, 1973), vol. VII, pp. 44-46.

[18] Charles S. Peirce, *Selected Writings*, pp. 124, 183, 221, 377-78, 120-21.

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an organ of knowledge: ". . . your heart . . . is also a perceptive organ—and you see him [God]." That is why, in Peirce's view, pragmatism was "going to be the dominant philosophical opinion of the twentieth century. . . ." He called "the Unknowable . . . a nominalistic heresy".[19]

Peirce's argument, however, seems one of desperation, of a determination to make a stand against the overwhelming forces of Evil and Hatred which he felt were operating in the guise of the social movements of our time. He never took seriously John Dewey's attempt to conjoin pragmatism with the democratic, political spirit, and his chief memory of Dewey was that of a moralistic graduate student who had quickly dropped out of Peirce's course in scientific logic at the Johns Hopkins University. However, because Peirce talked frequently of his philosophy as having been the outcome of his experiences as a man of the laboratory, not of the theological seminary, and because he wrote of the claims of truth as expressing the resolution of the unlimited community of scientific inquirers, he bequeathed a pragmatism that was more adapted to a political world of contracting possibilities, and an economic world of diminishing resources—a pragmatism more compatible with a long-term realistic pessimism.

OF ALL THE VARIETIES of pragmatism, the one explicated by Charles Peirce corresponds most to that which has had a tremendous resurgence in the last twenty years. That resurgence has been perhaps the most unusual socio-intellectual phenomenon in recent history.

For the generation after World War II, pragmatism was generally regarded as a philosophy of the past. Existentialism was much in vogue; metaphysical treatises of German Nazi and French pro-Stalinist anti-Americans were being studied; and student revolutionaries from Berlin to Berkeley to Tokyo described themselves as "existentialist Marxists". During the last fifteen years that phenomenon has been reversed, and almost every day *The New York Times* has an article reporting some statesman in Africa, Asia, Western Europe, the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, or Latin America as describing himself or being described approvingly as a pragmatist.

For a while, I catalogued these usages—until the expanding universe of clippings threatened the geometry of my small study. In the summer of 1984, for instance, the new socialist government in France was described (20 July) as "pragmatic". Iranian moderates were characterised (23 August) as wishing to behave "more pragmatically", while spokesmen for Japan's school system (12 August) asserted that "most Japanese consider themselves pragmatists [and], pragmatically speaking, [had] produced the educated, well-disciplined work force" that helped make possible "the country's economic surge". At that summer's Republican Convention, Vice-President George Bush was reported (22 August) as "re-emphasising his pragmatic conservatism . . .", while on the preceding day a letter on the pregnancies of teen-age mothers as their chosen route toward economic independence was entitled "The Pragmatism in Becoming an Unwed Mother".

In that year, too, the nomination by the Democratic Party of Geraldine Ferraro for Vice-President of the United States was adjudged "pragmatic" in a popular Canadian newspaper (*Toronto Sun,* 20 July 1984) on the ground that she would "add 15 or 19 points" to the presidential candidate's standing. At this juncture the correspondent observed that "this year's 'in' word on the political circuit [was] 'pragmatic'."

Four years later, on 24 April 1988, *The New York Times* averred in two headlines: "PRAGMATISTS LEAD IN BUSH ECONOMICS" and "BUSH TURNS TO PRAGMATISTS FOR ECONOMIC POLICIES". More exotic, however, were the reports from China (*The New York Times,* 26 March 1988) that moderation, the re-emergence of private property, and "pragmatism" were part of the new orthodoxy that the opposition denounced as "bourgeois liberalisation": "A SENSE OF PRAGMATISM PREVAILS" said the headline. Even the official Chinese News Agency was quoted (13 April 1988) as describing the new group of state councils as "a group of technocrats, who are younger in age, pragmatic, and enthusiastic in the reform". That same day, however, the plight of homosexuals, in their constricted political choices, was sympathetically expressed: "Do you 'hold your nose and vote for Dukakis because you're a pragmatist'? I know a lot of people who will do that, but God knows not comfortably."

Meanwhile, reports had been arriving from Ho Chi Minh City in Viet Nam which were meant to conciliate Americans; the new leader of the Communist Party, Nguyen Van Linh, although 72 years old, was described (4 February 1988) as a follower of "pragmatism" who was succeeding in removing the indurated party apparatus. In America, at that time, political analysts were worried by the rise of "the religious right"; one of them queried (1 March 1988) whether the Rev. Pat Robertson, a presidential aspirant, could "use his influence carefully, moderately and pragmatically". Two weeks earlier an article entitled "Europe Talks: Pragmatism and Fury" had described (16 February 1988) how François Chirac had had to apologise to the British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, for using a coarse expletive.

Reports from the Soviet Union have, of course, for some years been describing Mikhail Gorbachov as a pragmatist; they began when Armand Hammer, who has known nearly every Soviet ruler since Lenin (and entertained John Dewey several times in Moscow during Dewey's brief visit to Russia), announced (18 June 1985) that: "I am very much impressed by [Gorbachov] as a leader—very forthright, very intelligent with a good sense of humour, very pragmatic."

IT IS PEIRCE'S scientific-moral pragmatism that especially answers to the mood and needs of our newly-evolving political era. This reborn pragmatism alone has the sobriety of judgment that a time of diminishing social possibilities requires.

A recent summary article in *The New Scientist* tried to

[19] Charles Sanders Peirce, *Collected Papers,* vol. VI, pp. 319, 326, 344-47.

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take comfort from the notion that the Greenhouse Effect would at any rate be "a more desirable state of the world, from the human point of view, than the onset of a new Ice Age might be".[20] And *The New York Times*'s editorial page (9 October 1988) pondered sombrely what the consequences would be if crop ranges shifted toward the equator and the West Antarctic ice cap melted—raising the sea and finally "forcing the evacuation of New Orleans, New York, London, and Beijing". The world would then be threatened by outbreaks of social calamities worse perhaps than those that Peirce in his most pessimistic mood ever envisaged. The most sanguinary wars among peoples struggling for land and survival might ensue; the world's civilisation would be imperilled. An anti-science movement might arise that would, like Christian anti-scientists during the latter Roman Empire, try to extirpate the scientific universities as they once did the School and Library at Alexandria.

Peirce's pragmatism, unlike William James's, recognised the pessimistic truth that faith is probably more often contravened than confirmed by its consequences; that self-fulfilling prophecies have been statistically infrequent; and that a continuous effort is required to maintain a democratic loyalty to science. Whatever the crises of the 21st century may prove to be, their consequences will be least unfavourable for mankind if they are met with a scientific pragmatic spirit.

The new scientific pragmatism will have no inner, prior commitment to any political-economic system, and its own test will be more fully experimental. Thus young Soviet thinkers today weigh the postulates of their social system against its experimental consequences. During the 1920s and early 1930s, several remarkable essays were published by such economists as Ludwig von Mises and Friedrich von Hayek which showed on theoretical grounds that a socialist planned economy, lacking as it would a competitive market, would be unable to allocate rationally the diverse producers' and consumers' "goods"; for, in a competitive market, demand and supply tend to determine in a rational manner those quantities manufactured, and priced, and bought. They thereby predicted and explained the chronic shortages, inefficiencies, long waiting-lines, shoddy workmanship, and surly social relations that came to characterise the Soviet economy.

The rejoinder of Marxist economists and social scientists was that every social system has its own corresponding sociological laws, and that the Socialist economy would evolve its own specific method for rational allocation of productive resources. Only an experimental determination could resolve such faith in a "dialectical evolution", and it is the failure of the Soviet system to solve its problem of rational allocation after more than 70 years of effort, exhortation, and education, that has led it to begin the shelving of its ideology.

Perhaps that is why young Soviet philosophers tend to turn to Charles Peirce's works for inspiration. Twenty-five years ago I spent a fortnight or so at Tbilisi in Soviet Georgia, as a guest of the Institute of Philosophy. I found a group of young philosophers studying photographic copies of the pages of Peirce's *Collected Papers*—they could not procure American currency with which to import the books. They handled these photographed pages almost as if they were sacred scrolls.

For them, Peirce's pragmatism was not just an American mode of thought, or one born of optimism, or a by-product of Darwin's theory of natural selection; it expressed the scientific temper of mind which arises among those who, in whatever society they chance to find themselves, aspire to rationality.

[20] John Gribbin, "The Greenhouse Effect", Inside Science, Number 13, *The New Scientist* (22 October 1988), vol. 120, p. 4.

Dyrham Park

Travellers on the Bath road, jolting south,
Used to listen out for a waterfall,
This *à-la-mode* cataract, less than a mile
To the next inn. Out of sight underneath

The ridge, it boomed. It had a mouth
Like battle getting nearer. Today all
Is quiet. Nothing but grass pours down the hill.
Fashion translated water into earth

And now there is no way that travellers
Can hear their whereabouts. Yet long before
The cataract was stifled, nearing home

They would have had intimations once a year
Of the perpetual silences to come
For every February this water froze.

Patricia Beer

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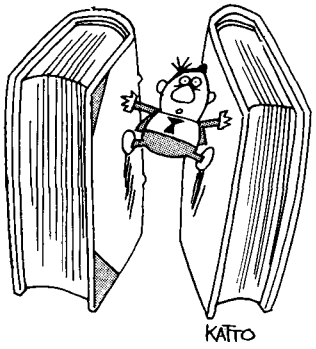
NOTES & TOPICS

On First Looking Into Maxwell's Husak

By Edward Pearce



THE COLLECTIVE biography of the recent dominant names of East European Communism would be the biography of ninepins. One contemplates them as Thomas Hardy contemplated the village dead: "William Dewy, Tranter Reuben, Farmer Ledlow late at plough . . . and the Squire and Lady Susan". They don't mind if we burn their "old bass viol", for "If you break my best china, children, I shan't care or know . . . ." Tranter Zhivkov is as dead as Squire Chernenko for the interesting and exhilarating purposes of the late 20th century.

The hideous old men have gone; Comrades Brezhnev, Andropov, and Chernenko; the late János Kádár was removed by men and events in his lifetime; Honecker and Zhivkov were brought down in response to a public demand previously not thought to have an equity in government. The whole godforsaken boiling of them—formulators of correct Party lines, instructors of secret security forces, makers of three-hour speeches, objects of reverence in cement-coloured leading articles beyond the Vistula—has changed shelves, removed from CURRENT EVENTS to HISTORY.

But it was once and very recently thought worth while to court these men, to have constructive dialogues with them, and to have correct, even friendly, relations with their governments. They were an Establishment, treated comfortably by our own Establishment which responds with distinct unease, as boss mourns boss, to their overthrow. There was in the relationship with the post-Stalinists of the last 30 years something of the impulse of Linus in *Peanuts*. Linus, remember, has a comfort-object: an old blanket. When Snoopy, to gain his private doggy ends, periodically abstracts the blanket, Linus always bursts into tears. No one quite *wept* for the Brezhnev clones, but many Western politicians have missed their blanket.

If our leaders were comfortable with the fixed and reassuring emperors in their Eastern palaces, no one made much pretence of liking them or looking to their pronouncements for enlightenment. But for reasons which must surely be excellent, Captain Robert Maxwell sought entrée to the useful world of old-style Soviet power by means of a publication venture as charming in Prague and Sofia as it was market-elusive in the rest of the world.

The publications of Captain Maxwell's Pergamon Press are daunting—none more so than the series entitled "Leaders of The World", under the general editorship, so it says, of Robert Maxwell, MC. These are volumes of collected speeches from which we can derive the wisdom and world-guidance of such dazzlers as Erich Honecker, Nicolae Ceauşescu, and (wait for it) K. V. Chernenko, not to mention the ruler of Poland, referred to without any other name simply as "Jaruzelski", as one might have said "Godzilla" or "Betty". Also in there, elbow-to-elbow with the leaders of world socialism on the grounds that he can be quite as obsessively tedious as any of them, are that agrarian Hindu reformer Moraji Desai, and somebody called Ronald Reagan. Otherwise it is a clean sweep for the People's Democracies, incorporating Leonid Brezhnev, Todor Zhivkov (of Bulgaria), Deng Xiaoping, and János Kádár. The only natural read among all these ear-grinders is M. S. Gorbachov, a positive Judith Krantz snapped up at the airport.

THE SPEECHES of Gustav Husak are not, surely not even in Czechoslovakia, really designed to be read. The nearest analogy is with the 18th- and 19th-century habit of publishing the collected sermons of clergymen—the sermons of the Reverend William Collins, later Lord Bishop of St Asaph, in handsome buckskin duodecimo looked well and orthodox on the shelves of country gentlemen unlikely to read far beyond the racing form guide.

I have always seen Captain Maxwell's enterprise as a sort of vanity-printing on a grand scale. It would be unwise to suggest that the authors of this alpine range of the turgid actually *paid* Robert Maxwell or had their governments do so for the pleasure of getting into print in translation, handsomely bound and with many colour plates, like unrecognised poets with private means. But I cannot imagine *him* paying *them*. And I know of no instance of any of these books being bought by anyone. I only looked into Maxwell's *Husak*—published in 1986, and now deservedly out of print—because it was sitting there, a languishing prose freebie on the shelves of a newspaper office.

And not for a second would I make the monstrous affectation of having read it. The prose is like unsweetened toffee.

> "In order to strengthen the broad anti-imperialist front of joint action by progressive, democratic and peace forces, Czechoslovakia has been developing friendly ties and fruitful co-operation with many countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. . . ."

The sermons of Dr Husak are very reminiscent of that sovietising style which George Orwell compared to a sink stopped with tea-leaves. Though, since here is (or was) an actual broker of power, one occasionally sees something glinting grimly through the miasma:

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"There are many inconsistencies in numerous areas of management, in cadre work, in the fulfilment of decisions adopted. We cannot turn a blind eye to such phenomena. An uncritical spirit and unprincipled stand lead to subjectivism, stagnation and loss of perspective. The consequences to which this might lead are clear from our dearly paid experience in the 1960s. . . ."

Indeed they are.

READING THIS DISMAL STUFF, one's mind goes back to 1968 and Dubček, and all those young faces in the Prague squares, recollecting that this is not just a boring, bureaucratic politician but a turner-out-of-lights, a stamper on freedom, a locker-up of anyone trying to speak his mind, an expeller for over twenty years of any Party member to have welcomed such petty-bourgeois notions. Dubček in chains and degraded exile, Vaclav Havel sent to work in a brewery and supervised by wall-to-wall spooks, were triumphs of this man's art. We have in Husak a prelate of illiberalism, taking his principled stand on the face of any citizen speaking out of turn.

But how fascinating it is to look at the pictures, the many coloured plates provided by Robert Maxwell, MC, in his handsome edition. There are, of course, the pompous photo-opportunity confections: meetings with famous people hardly more agreeable than the subject, Indira Gandhi, President Assad of Syria, Menghistu Haile Meriam of Ethiopia, and Captain Robert Maxwell, MC. These pictures for some reason show identical, rather beautiful, flasks of Bohemian glass containing what looks like orange juice. There are always fresh-cut flowers and charming 18th-century white-and-gilt tables. The good taste of the immediate advisors of most power-holders brings a graciousness into their daily lives.

Much more interesting are the earlier pictures. Once upon a time Gustav Husak, he of the correct and principled stand, was a young man. There is a snap of him at eighteen months with his widowed stone-mason father, his grandmother and sisters—hard-ground peasant subjects of the eastern reaches of the Habsburg Empire, respectable and very poor. There is a picture of Husak the student, head down at study, something which will have represented a massive rare chance for a poor boy. Most touching of all, there is young Gustav in his twenties being embraced by his dog, a big Alsatian. Husak in this picture, despite buttoning up his collar, has the look, never to be seen again, of the carefree idealistic young man. It could be the picture of one of those iconic Communists like John Cornford, who died in Spain without a second's doubt that the Party represented youth, hope, truth, and high endeavour. They were athletes dying young, as A. E. Housman had it:

Now you will not swell the rout
Of lads that wore their honour out
Runners who renown outran
And the name died before the man.

One should not, because of the cut of a jacket or a look in the eyes, couple a holder of power with a poet. Still, everyone has been some sort of idealist, and the contrast between young Husak with his dog and indeed the slightly older Husak as a member of the Slovak rising (a Communist front but a force against the Nazis) is vast. It seems a planetary age from the man inspecting guards of honour in Prague Castle and drinking orange juice with the President of Algeria.

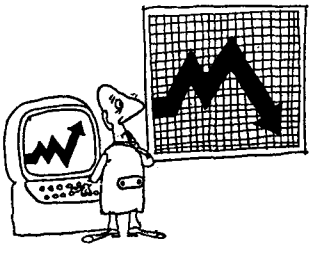
There is, however, one picture from the late 1940s which bridges it very nicely. The still young but already power-connected Husak is seen leaning helpfully over to assist two seated figures, Klement Gottwald and Antonin Zapotocky. (You could take him for the Bernard figure in *Yes, Minister*.) But it was Gottwald who hanged his democratic non-Communist opponents and then in due course hanged his own colleagues. Pictures of young Husak with the ill-fated Rudolf Slansky, like pictures of an older Husak with Alexander Dubček, are not displayed.

Orwell got it right again. At fifty, he said, we have the face we deserve. At fifty (a picture of 1964), Husak has the *face of a stone*.

Paris Notebook

By Jean-François Revel

Surprise, Surprise!



BEWARE OF elections: they have a way of producing the unexpected. Those who deplored Nicaragua's repetition of a mistake to which history had already given the thumbs-down asked only one thing of the Sandinistas—that they should let the people vote in straightforward, multi-party elections. The surprise this time was that the result surprised anyone.

On the Sunday, however, with voting in Nicaragua still going on, one of our French television channels was offering a Sandinista victory as a certainty. French-Swiss television had done the same the day before. At three o'clock GMT on the Monday morning, the BBC announced that early returns indicated a Sandinista lead. They even put a figure on it: 52%. Shortly afterwards, Radio France Internationale salvaged its honour by proclaiming precisely the opposite. Regal as ever, *The Economist* had delivered its prognosis on 10 February: Daniel Ortega 51%; Violeta Chamorro 24%. Just before the count, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine* predicted 60% for Ortega and 30% for Chamorro.

The electorate gave Chamorro 55.2% and Ortega 40.8%.

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So why, with very few exceptions (only a few writers in the Paris and London papers which I saw), did the media, the international press, and the politicians so rashly give credence to Sandinista boasts, and treat an Ortega victory as a foregone conclusion?

Their blunder goes back a long way. It has its roots in an erroneous interpretation of the Sandinista and anti-Sandinista factions which has enjoyed general currency.

Mistake number one: the United States, it was said, had been against the new régime from the outset. *Wrong*. They supported it—and gave it economic aid—in 1979 and 1980. Their hostility began only after the establishment of a pro-Soviet dictatorship.

Mistake number two: the Contras were a purely artificial creation, owing their existence entirely to the CIA and the supporters of Somoza. *Wrong*. The CIA did indeed support the Contra movement, but that movement none the less sprang from an authentic rebellion on the part of the peasantry against requisitions of foodstuffs, and compulsory military service (which had never existed before). Nine out of ten Contras, particularly after 1985, were children at the time of the fall of Somoza.

Mistake number three: the economic failure of socialism (once again!) in Nicaragua allegedly stemmed from the military expenditure made necessary by the civil war. *Wrong*. That expenditure was covered in full by the Soviet Union. Or again, it was the American embargo that had bankrupted the country. *Wrong*. The embargo succeeded in cutting exports; it could not impose domestic scarcity in a country with a flourishing agricultural industry. (As a matter of fact, the agricultural balance was still showing a surplus of 106 million dollars in 1987—but nobody knows where the money went.)

How, exactly, did so many foreign correspondents spend their time during the Sandinista years if they failed to realise the disappointment and dissatisfaction of the Nicaraguan people? This list of mistakes might be prolonged *ad infinitum*, but I add to it only one more: Violeta Chamorro is supposed to be a product of American money, nothing more. The US Congress did indeed vote her, entirely officially, 3.3 million dollars' worth of Aid. Why have the media harped endlessly on this fact without mentioning the 3-4 billion dollars that Ortega received annually from the USSR? What is more, the Sandinista rulers stopped the bank transfers intended for the opposition, which was able to draw only $200,000 in time. The election campaign was not a fair fight between two parties; it was an opposition being bludgeoned by a government. And that makes the outcome even more convincing.

All right, neither camp is perfect. But why this desperate attempt by a large section of the free world's media—at a cost of goodness knows how many loaded television debates—to prove that opposition to the Sandinistas could not possibly be democratic or reflect genuine popular aspirations? The lesson of this inglorious lie is that people are always right to call for elections.

Playing Old Beatles Songs

These songs that interspersed my locust years
with hopes impossible to realise,
were then eclipsed when each new wave appeared,
driving on through soul and psychedelia,
shrug off my twenty-year neglect and rise
again to prove that youth can speak with age
better through a song than on the page.

Untainted by their years of litigation,
the silliness that drivelled round their birth,
they live now in a realm of pure elation,
distilled from songbook, one guitar, and voices,
with humour's guy-ropes pegging them to earth;
the sifting winds of natural selection
have blown these harmonies in our direction.

It suits me now that nothing is at stake
to share this spot where space bends round a tune
and feel such long-dead instincts wake;
you say, "You know exactly what they meant",
and yet it's enigmatic as a rune:
these grace notes fluttering from the Muse's hand
to bind us for a moment in one band.

Peter Forbes

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Out of the Rubble of the Berlin Wall

Germany at a Turning-Point—By HAROLD JAMES

ONCE UPON A TIME there was an Emperor who loved his country so much that he built a wall around it to keep the people quite happy. The East Berlin satirical cabaret *Die Distel* tells the story that, since the German word for wall is *Mauer*, the country was called Mauer-retainia. Then comes a little girl—and the rest of the tale is familiar. The Emperor has no clothes, she says, and everyone wakes up to reality.

The peculiarity was that the illusion of stability and success was as much in the West as in Mauer-retainia itself. We do not like to think about unclothed Emperors, and as a result "Real-existing Socialism" was endowed with many layers of clothes. "The GDR was the most prosperous East European society . . . its citizens had discovered an indigenous historical tradition . . . they had a fierce sense of their own identity." And so on. Over the last year these clothes disappeared one by one: first there were the surprisingly large-scale protests against the régime, then demands for reunification, then a massive vote against socialism and for the market economy.

Two beliefs had kept the Emperor's clothes in place. First, that divided Germany and divided Europe represented not a source of potential explosion but a guarantee of geopolitical stability. Secondly, that divided Germany could give socialism a chance. These were ideas held as firmly in the West as on the other side of the Berlin Wall. As a concomitant to Chancellor Willy Brandt's *Ostpolitik*, West German scholars on the subject of East Germany began to describe the signs of stability and a *rapprochement* between the two systems that would bring an eventual change because of "convergence".

Germany, as a result, occupied a particular place in the imagination of the world. Stefan Heym, a mildly dissident Marxist and one of the early figures in the protest movement against the Honecker régime, still insisted last November: "I am saying that a socialist state in Germany is absolutely necessary for socialist development in the whole world. . . ." Now, significantly, he has revised the line. The *DDR* has become nothing more than "a footnote in history".[1]

Socialism went wrong, this version ran, because it was first applied in backward Russia. Asiatic brutality meant the deformation of an idealistic movement. If, on the other hand, it had happened in civilised Germany, committed after the experience of the Third Reich to an anti-fascist tradition, the world might have been truly saved.

WHY DID THE WEST so persistently misunderstand the East, and wrap itself up in its own bundle of illusions, its own version of Mauer-retainia?

Dennis Bark and David Gress give some answers to this question in a powerful account of the history of West Germany, published more or less at the moment when the collapse of the *DDR* meant that the end of the two Germanies came into view, and unity suddenly appeared at the top of the political agenda.[2] It is compellingly written, and beautifully illustrated with telling quotations. There is little doubt that it will become the standard history of West Germany in English.

Authoritative in giving a factually reliable history of modern Germany, it makes no attempt to conceal that it is a partisan history: contemplated and understood (*verstandene*) history, as the title page quotation from Ranke makes clear. The authors constantly attack those they describe—perhaps slightly irritatingly—as "leftists" for drawing too many lines of continuity with Germany's authoritarian past and for not stressing sufficiently the novelty and success of the Bonn Federal Republic as an operating democracy.

From the perspective of 1990, and imminent unity, their account has two major attractions. First, they tell the West German story primarily as the history of foreign policy and Germany's role in the international order. Secondly, they build their account around the division of Germany, and the Wall. One of the authors describes how his fascination with

[1] Interview in *Marxism Today* (November 1989), p. 14; Radio interview, 18 March 1990.

[2] *A History of West Germany: Volume I: From Shadow to Substance 1945-1963; Volume II: Democracy and its Discontents 1963-1988*. By DENNIS L. BARK and DAVID R. GRESS. Basil Blackwell, £30.00 each; Basil Blackwell Inc., $34.95 each.

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Germany began when he crossed Checkpoint Charlie in 1962 at precisely the moment that East German border guards shot Peter Fechter, a young East German attempting to flee across the Wall. Fechter bled to death just a few metres inside the East before his corpse was carried away.

The first aspect of their story is the unease of the Federal Republic's position between East and West, and the success of Dr Konrad Adenauer in the 1950s in securing identification with, and identity within, the West. By 1959-60 the *SPD* had joined the consensus about market economy and Western ties. But the possibility of a breakdown of this consensus, and a shift once more to the East (Rapallo? Tauroggen?), subsequently always made Germany's position at least potentially volatile.

Hesitancy about the identification also meant uncertainty about what West was being joined: this was the debate often simplified as a clash between the ideals of NATO and the EEC, or between "Atlanticists" and "Europeanists" (or, less politely, Gaullists). The latter terms dominated political debates during the last years of Dr Adenauer's Chancellorship. On the one hand, Adenauer and his supporters (including the young Franz Josef Strauss) looked to closer collaboration with General de Gaulle, and celebrated the signing of the Elysée Treaty in 1963. Adenauer admired de Gaulle uniquely among European leaders, and de Gaulle made no secret of his belief in *un grand peuple, les allemands*. But underlying this relationship (and despite the common aura of Catholic politics) there lay a deep tension: between Adenauer's commitment to European integration and federalism, and the gradual vanishing of the nation-state, as against General de Gaulle's sense of a Europe in which national interest played the predominant part: *l'Europe des patries*. For Dr Adenauer, there could not really be a Europe of this kind, since he assumed very firmly the reality of German division in the light of Soviet power. And whatever West Germany was, it could not be "a nation-state" in the traditional sense.

The authors identify much more closely with "the Atlanticists"—partly because of the contradictions of the European position. A security alliance made sense, and provided the setting in which the West German economic miracle could take place. Unlike de Gaulle's vision of Europe, NATO did *not* require nation-states. Dr Ludwig Erhard, and the younger *SPD* leaders—Fritz Erler, Willy Brandt, and Helmut Schmidt—saw this possibility clearly.

But NATO is an alliance of states, not a supranational defence community of the type envisaged by the USA and also by Germany in the early 1950s as "the European Defence Community". There was always an implication that an *Ostpolitik* independent of NATO was not ruled out simply by the fact of NATO membership. Nor, of course, is "Atlanticism" or commitment to NATO necessarily incompatible with European integration; and there were many moments, especially in the late 1940s and early 1950s, when the principal drive to bind Europe together came from Washington.

It is easy to suppose that the "Atlanticist-Europeanist" division is an artificial one: some analysts see in it simply the result of Dr Adenauer's failing political capacities, and resentment within the *CDU* about Ludwig Erhard's position. Bark and Gress avoid interpreting the divide as the result just of a high political clash of personalities. They are much more inclined to blame de Gaulle for seducing the Germans with "French blandishments" and for irresponsibility in dealing with a Soviet threat to Western Europe.

Were the German Gaullists irrational? There are also grounds for thinking that Germans had some reason for being disappointed by the Atlantic tie. West Germany owed its existence, in the first place, largely to American efforts and controls and advice. It reached full sovereignty in 1955 as part of NATO. Then, however, followed moments when the strength of the American commitment appeared to waver: and to a half-Germany reared to such a degree of dependence, such wavering produced great alarm. It was as if a parent were giving up on a child: and there is an element of parent-child relationship, including juvenile revolt, in the whole course of German-American relations.

THE POLITICAL BIOGRAPHIES of West German political leaders contain a crucial moment, a Road-to-Damascus experience, when there comes a realisation that the USA is not entirely to be depended on. For both Willy Brandt and Franz Josef Strauss (there is a surprising degree of overlap in their autobiographies), the 1961 Berlin crisis was this moment.

The construction of the Wall had been preceded by Senator Fulbright's ill-judged advice to East Germany on how to stop the flood of refugees to the West: just build a barrier. . . . After 13 August, President Kennedy made it clear that the USA, however it might deplore the construction, regarded its interests as being confined to West Berlin. Kennedy's 17 August letter to Willy Brandt ruled out the use of military force, and Brandt learnt the lesson:

> "I said later that in August 1961 a curtain was drawn aside to reveal an empty stage. To put it bluntly, we lost certain illusions that had outlived the hopes underlying them—illusions that clung to something that no longer existed in fact."

Strauss drew the same lesson, and also blamed the USA for helping Brandt too much, or for not helping Adenauer enough, in the 1961 election campaign:

> "That the Soviets should build a Wall in Berlin without being disturbed, this was possible only by agreement (*Abstimmung*) with the Americans. I thought this a scandalous procedure."[3]

Schmidt, long the *SPD*'s defence expert, awakened to reality slightly later. In 1964 President Johnson suddenly dropped the 1961 proposal for a Multilateral Force, and embarrassed those European allies who had committed themselves to the American proposal. Schmidt noted:

"We, who had fought for an important strategic interest

[3] See Willy Brandt, *Erinnerungen* (Propyläen Verlag, 1989); Franz Josef Strauss, *Die Erinnerungen* (Siedler Verlag, 1989).

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of the US, were fooled and lost reputation at home. That was the first time I realised that it can be risky, in domestic politics, to commit oneself on behalf of a policy of the leading power of the alliance, if that power is inconsistent and unreliable. . . ."[4]

The Reykjavik summit of President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachov fits into this story of moments of German disillusion. Chancellor Helmut Kohl was terrified by the possibility of the denuclearisation of Germany, which would subvert the common policy he had inherited from Helmut Schmidt's administration. The support for Dr Kohl's policy from President Mitterrand, during the missile-stationing debate of 1983, the later assistance of Jacques Chirac, and the bitter experience of Reykjavik in 1986, demonstrated the soundness of the "Gaullist" position in Germany. The subsequent strengthening of the Franco-German relationship, including military cooperation, provided the basis for a new push to European integration.

This historical account has considerable importance when it comes to assessing the international framework of "the German Revolution" of 1989-90. The relative stability of the American position, Richard Burt's encouragement when he was US Ambassador in Bonn and, before the upheavals of the summer of 1989, Secretary of State James Baker's speedy acceptance of the process of unification—all contrasted dramatically with the nervousness of Mrs Thatcher's government, and the vacillations of the Soviet Union. Have Baker and Bush proved de Gaulle wrong? They have certainly made much more compelling the claim that Germany needs in the future to be associated with a stable security system in NATO.

On the other hand, the basic ambiguity on the European side that had existed since Dr Adenauer's discussions with de Gaulle still remains: full integration versus a *Europe des patries*, but a Europe in which Germany once again is clearly and unambiguously at last a *patrie*. It is not surprising that the latest development has won France away from the Gaullist stance and made federation attractive as a way of harnessing Germany. Despite Chancellor Kohl's insistence on "synchronising" European and German integration, the French and German positions of the early 1960s are now reversed. French Gaullism may have had its day, but a German Gaullism is coming into its own.

THE SECOND THEME raised by Bark and Gress is the change which the construction of the Wall imposed on West German cultural life and sense of identity. They offer a striking and simple answer: a new movement began in the divided city.

> "In Berlin the building of the Wall in 1961 had a curious consequence at the university: 'in the place of rejection of Marxism came a preoccupation with it'. . . ."

In the 1960s there took place:

[4] Bark and Gress, *A History of West Germany*, p. 24. Helmut Schmidt, *Menschen und Mächte* (Siedler Verlag, 1987), p. 176.

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> ". . . the rise of a rigorous and sometimes fanatical political moralism which condemned Western imperialism and oppression, and praised the alleged virtues of totalitarian régimes and their political efforts to control and subjugate their populations."

Perhaps this linking of the Wall and the eruption of Student Protest cuts a few corners. But Bark and Gress also point out the exceptional extent to which politics in West Germany are debated in an intellectual community in moral terms rather than as pragmatic issues. To use Max Weber's term, they prefer "the ethic of responsibility".

Its roots are complex. Some lie within a German tradition, but most date to the years after 1945. Concern with exploring, and confronting, the Nazi past constitutes the major part of this peculiarly German climate. Since the enormous publicity of the Auschwitz trial in the early 1960s, honesty about the past has become a touchstone of German politics (in a way very obviously not true of Austria). President Weizsäcker's moving address on 8 May 1985 hit a note of profound morality that would be impossible to imagine in any other country.

> "A new generation has grown up to assume political responsibility. Our young people are not responsible for what happened over 40 years ago. But they are responsible for the historical consequences. . . . We must help younger people to understand why it is so vital to keep memories alive. . . . On this 8th of May, let us face up as well as we can to the truth."

Can there be practical political consequences of such a recognition of the responsibilities imposed by the past: specific responsibilities to the victims of genocide in World War II as well as to world peace? The problem is that drawing practical lessons immediately seems shabby and opportunistic.

Denunciations of political or intellectual opponents by comparing them with "Nazis" may be sincerely intentioned (though usually they are not). In practice, they are often simply sordid manipulations. The widely repeated accusation by Hans Magnus Enzensberger that Dr Adenauer was "a restorationist" who had failed to stamp out the roots of Nazism; the claim by *Der Spiegel*'s editor, Rudolf Augstein, that the highly respected historian Andreas Hillgruber was "a constitutional Nazi"; the argument presented by Günter Grass that the fact of the Nazi crime of Auschwitz should, 45 years later, make a united Germany altogether impossible; and conservative comparisons of the Greens with the Nazis—all these are attempts to use an historical event that is given the tragic stature of the sacred in order to shape a political debate.

IT HAS OFTEN become a standard formula for discussion. Identify a similarity between some aspect of Nazi ideology with the views of your opponent—state it—and thus end the discussion. Since Nazi ideology was highly inconsistent and internally contradictory—and there really were socialist, capitalist, anti-communist, anti-capitalist, anti-industrial, pro-industrial elements within it—this identification never calls for any great intellectual effort. On the other hand, it never makes for rational debate either.

The other peculiar component of the West German political and intellectual culture was the feeling of great fragility, of a balancing act on the edge of a great abyss—and that the polity and civil society could quite easily go over. . . . This vulnerability is a consequence of the political division of Germany and it was this, rather than any admiration for totalitarianism, that produced the peculiarly mixed responses in West Germany to the beginnings of the disintegration of the Soviet Empire in the early 1980s. When *Solidarity* started to challenge the Communist monopoly of power, many German progressives felt terrified. Only a few on the German Left—such as the novelist Peter Schneider—challenged this prevailing fear of change in Eastern Europe. For most, West Germany needed to be all on her own in order to conquer her historical ghosts.

This attitude was not confined to Germany—J. K. Galbraith, for instance, is quoted by Bark and Gress as saying, in his notorious interview with the Hamburg newspaper *Die Zeit*:

> "I think the Wall is a good thing. At any rate it has preserved peace."

But that peace was stronger in West Germany than anywhere else. The result was an immobilism which resisted any attempts at change; and whose spirit was nicely expressed in Theo Sommer's claim that

> ". . . regardless of the preamble to the *Grundgesetz* [the West German Basic Law], our political aim must be to create a situation in which reunification is no longer necessary."

Reminders of this now look awkward, and may appear to be unpleasant. What, it may be asked in retrospect, was the justification for arguing that the *status quo* which enserfed half of the European continent needed to be preserved? What was it in Western Europe, and specifically in West Germany, that an emergent democracy in the East might destroy?

THE SOBER answer is that these men and women feared, on quite rational grounds, that dramatic political change would destroy the West German compromise: because the institutions of the Bonn Republic—the Federal state structure, the Basic Law (which Bark and Gress rightly see as laying "a strong foundation for democratic development")—were perfectly adapted to the conditions of the half-nation-state.

The success of the Federal Republic in working on this basis depended on a combination of the economic success generated by the Social Market economy, integration into the Western security system, and—finally—the gradual evolution of a set of new institutions which actually work in practice. Effective institutions cannot be created overnight; they depend on politicians, civil servants, trade unionists, businessmen, farmers—all becoming peaceably accustomed to certain fixed ways of dealing with each other, and of sol-

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ving differences and conflicts. Germany's weakness in the past lay in the volatility of her institutions, in the absence of such long-term rules for political and social conduct.

The greatest mistake that could be made now is to imagine that any "new order" can be made to work simply by rapid economic growth unleashed by the transition of the East to a market economy. It is, however, true that such material growth can make a political system more acceptable.

Herein lies the importance of the debate about alternative paths to unification: Article 23 of the Basic Law, under which new territorial units (the East German *Länder*) can simply apply to join the Federal Republic; or Article 146, providing for the framing of a new Constitution by a constituent assembly.

Just how unlikely such an eventuality as *Wiedervereinigung*—reunification—was thought to be can be judged by the complete absence from the 1,046 pages of Bark and Gress's scholarly and definitive account of any discussion of these two articles of the Basic Law. Mrs Thatcher was widely and roundly condemned for telling a London Sunday newspaper that "a few months ago we did not know about Article 23, and neither did anyone else, I think. . . ."[5] But she was, for all practical purposes, quite right. These Articles appeared to be the antiquated legacy of the incomplete German process of post-War state formation in 1948-49.

Luckily, in the meantime, a working German state did emerge. Inventing new Constitutions is a difficult and painful process, particularly when the participants have a very clear sense of where their interests lie—and how they can be protected by writing demands into a fundamental new codification of law. It is much easier to adopt an existing structure, and then make *ad hoc* provisions where necessary to make the process of integration smoother. The success of the Federal Republic's operation, and the powerful pull of its economy and its political parties and its laws, suggests that Article 23 is the right course. It provides a way of ending effectively the delusions of "Mauer-retainia", of the half-nation-states each side of the now dismantled frontier. It would finally remove the damaging uncertainty about Germany's position in Europe and the world.

[5] *Sunday Telegraph*, 25 March 1990.

The Memsahib at the Writing-Table

Women Writers of the Raj—By SAROS COWASJEE

IT IS ONE OF the ironies of the Raj that while Anglo-Indian[1] women have been repeatedly censured by male writers for their lack of sympathy and understanding of India, a gifted few have provided us with the best insights into the Indian mind and family. Attacks on the Anglo-Indian woman ("memsahib" as she is known in India) pre-date Kipling, who gave us the notorious Mrs Reiver and Mrs Hauksbee. But Kipling was not wholly critical of Anglo-Indian women, as can be seen from stories like "William the Conqueror"—a song of praise for those women who helped administer the Raj. It was the poet and publicist Wilfred Scawen Blunt who in 1885 made the first significant attack on Anglo-Indian women in his *Ideas About India*:

> "The Englishwoman in India during the last thirty years has been the cause of half the bitter feelings there between race and race. It was her presence at Cawnpore and Lucknow that pointed the sword of revenge after the Mutiny, and it is her constantly increasing influence now that widens the gulf of ill-feeling and makes amalgamation daily more impossible. I have over and over noticed this. The English collector, or the English doctor, or the English judge may have the best will in the world to meet their Indian neighbours . . . on equal terms. Their wives will hear of nothing of the sort, and the result is a meaningless interchange of cold civilities."

Add to this some of the lesser charges brought against Anglo-Indian women—their life of idleness and frivolity, their scandal-mongering and flirtations, their insensitivity and their rudeness towards Indians—and you have the conventional portrait of the memsahib with all her traits. And it was with one or more of these traits that she was portrayed by E. M. Forster, George Orwell, Dennis Kincaid, A. J. Ackerley, and Edmund Candler.

Taken piecemeal, what the men writers say about Anglo-Indian women is true, and even women writers such as Ethel Savi and Flora Annie Steel admit to the shortcomings of their fictional counterparts. What is false is the overall picture that ignores the resolution and fortitude with which many Anglo-Indian women faced an emotionally difficult life in India. Equally false is the notion that the majority of these women hindered their men from establishing a cordial relationship with Indians. Maud Diver, as early as 1909, pleaded in *The Englishwoman in India* for sympathy and

[1] The term "Anglo-Indian" was applied originally to the British in India, and only later to people of mixed British and Indian descent. Here it is used in its original meaning.

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understanding, and reminded a questioning public in England that "India's heroines and martyrs far outnumber her social sinners". In recent years several well-documented studies have striven to set the record straight; among these are J. K. Stanford's *Ladies in the Sun* (1962), Pat Barr's *The Memsahibs: The Women of Victorian India* (1976), Marian Fowler's *Below the Peacock Fan: First Ladies of the Raj* (1987), Margaret MacMillan's *Women of the Raj* (1988), and Mary Ann Lind's *The Compassionate Memsahibs* (1988).

That the stereotyped portrait of the memsahib should still persist in the popular imagination is, of course, a tribute to the fictional artistry of Kipling, Forster and Orwell. I cannot in a short article wholly correct this imbalance, but the achievements of Anglo-Indian women have not always been fully acknowledged: indeed, their contribution in the field of short fiction outstrips that of the men. No doubt the women writers have had the advantage that, except for Kipling, none of the major men writers of the Raj wrote short stories about India. Forster did not write any, nor did Ackerley, Dennis Kincaid, or Edward Thompson. The stories of Orwell and Leonard Woolf do not add up to even half a dozen, and they are not strictly about India. Philip Mason's collection *Whatever Dies* was published a year after the end of the Raj. This leaves only Kipling, formidable story-teller that he was.

A FACTOR WHICH gave the women writers an edge over their male counterparts was their access to the Indian domestic scene—to the women behind the *purdah*. The tragedy of the mute and suppressed Indian women touched them deeply, and some, like Katherine Mayo, gave expression to that tragedy with a wholesale attack on Indian religion and customs. Others, like Maud Diver in "Escape" and Flora Annie Steel in "A Maiden's Prayer" and "The Reformer's Wife", offered a more subdued though none the less stringent criticism. Steel, who learned the Indian languages and dialects which came her way, is easily the most perceptive observer among Anglo-Indian writers. Her admission that India "is a hard country for a Westerner to grasp" leads her to examine the Indian psyche closely and not to pass judgments based on European *mores*.

The women writers did not, however, confine themselves to portraying Indian domestic life. A good few of them wrote on subjects which male writers had marked as their own. Among these subjects were hunting, soldiering, administration of justice, and blood feuds on the North-West Frontier. Alice Perrin's "Caulfield's Crime" and Flora Annie Steel's "The Gift of Battle" and "Habitual Criminals" show the female writer poaching, as it were, on a male preserve. Flora Annie Steel travelled widely with her husband, who was a District Officer in the Punjab, and came to know the Pathans intimately. Her "Faizullah", set in the north-west province of Baluchistan, is a story Kipling himself might have written, with its blood-letting, jealousy, intrigues and primitive passions.

Almost without exception, the women writers remained the staunchest supporters of the Raj. Except for Christine Weston, none of them shared Forster's view that Indians should be treated as equals, or Orwell's ambivalence on the question of Indians' governing themselves. They believed in upholding British "prestige" and could never have agreed with Orwell that the Raj was a gigantic confidence-trick. Their conservatism can be gauged from the fact that many of them approved of General Reginald Dyer's massacre of unarmed Indians at Jallianwalla Bagh in 1919, and a few even contributed to the Dyer Appreciation Fund which raised £26,000 for the dismissed General. This conservatism—the most serious shortcoming of the Anglo-Indian women—emanated from the horrors that had befallen them; every political agitation on the part of the Indians seemed to raise in them the fears of another mutiny.

THEIR ATTITUDE towards India can, however, be attributed in large part to an innate sense of racial superiority from which even Flora Annie Steel was not free. Pat Barr in *The Memsahibs* tells us that Steel "was a natural-born autocrat of a not entirely benevolent type". In *The Complete Indian Homekeeper and Cook* (1888), Steel recommended a "system of rewards and punishments" to be adopted towards servants—the truly incorrigible to be dosed with castor oil. It is no surprise that in most of her stories, as well as in the stories of other Anglo-Indian writers, the good Indian is the obedient Indian, and the best Indian has a childlike dependence on the English rulers.

Among the women writers, Flora Annie Steel, Alice Perrin, Sara Jeannette Duncan and Christine Weston stand out. Steel's very first story to be sold, entitled "Lal", is evocative of the elusiveness of India:

> "Who was Lal? What was he? This was a question I asked many times; and though it was duly answered, Lal remained, and remains still, an unknown quantity—an abstraction, a name, and nothing more. LAL. The same backwards and forwards, self-contained, self-sufficing."

The story reminds one of a scene in *A Passage to India* where Ronny and Adela see a bird and naturally want to identify it. But they fail, and Forster tells us that "nothing in India is identifiable, the mere asking of a question causes it to disappear or to merge into something else". Steel knows, as Forster was to know later, that in India understanding comes not through inquiry but through acceptance.

Steel's pre-eminence rests on a sympathetic understanding of those Indian ways and attitudes which most Europeans find frustrating. For example, speaking of the Indian irreverence for time in her autobiography, *The Garden of Fidelity* (1929), she observes that

> ". . . one of the first lessons to learn in India is that 'Time is nought'. At first it is exasperating; but when one comes to realise the philosophic truth which underlies the crude statement one is forced to respect it."

The same grasp of philosophic truth underlies one of her best short stories, "The Doll-Maker". An old servant, who has lived out his usefulness, makes a rag doll and gives it to his master and mistress as a Christmas gift for their children:

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> "'It is for the child-people,' he said, in his cracked old voice. 'This dust-like one has nothing else, but a doll is always a doll to them, as a child is a child to the man and the woman.'"

The children have been packed off to England, and the husband and wife, their lives now empty, are drifting apart. But the rag doll kindles memories of the past, and the couple make another attempt at being together. In the simple observation of the doll-maker—"a child is a child to the man and the woman"—there is the wisdom of the ages.

IN HER PORTRAYAL of the Indian peasantry, Steel reveals her power of observation, her narrative skill, and her sense of humour. Humour is, in fact, one of the distinguishing features of her story-telling style. She has a singular way of portraying the ridiculous without ridiculing it. "London" is the story of an illiterate farmer who goes to London to implore the great Queen herself to settle his land claim. The story brings out those qualities of the Indian farmer (his simplicity, his courage, his perseverance and his reliance on British justice) that have endeared him to generations of Anglo-Indians. It also throws light on the hard-working District Officer, a familiar figure in Anglo-Indian fiction, and on the rules and the red tape that forever hamper even the most efficient of bureaucracies.

There are few stories funnier than Steel's "At the Great Durbar". Nanuk, an old Sikh farmer whose crops have been destroyed by rats, sets out to seek the *Lat-sahib*—"the vice-regent of God upon earth"—to tell him why he cannot afford to pay the taxes. To make his case fool-proof, he takes along a captured rat from his field, for the law requires the presence of both plaintiff and defendant—the defendant in this case being the rat. Instead of the *Lat-sahib*, he stumbles on the intoxicated Private Smith on guard duty, who beckons him to partake of the bottle:

> "Come now, Johnny, don't be a fool—it's rum, I tell yer, and you Sickies ain't afraid o' rum. Wot! you won't drink 'er 'elth, you mutineering nigger? Then I'll make yer. Feel that—now then, 'Ere's a 'elth unto'w her Majesty."

Beneath the buoyant humour of "At the Great Durbar" and of "London", there is a remarkably accurate portrait of the Indian peasant and his agrarian problems. We learn something about his fatal attachment to the land, the complicated ownership laws, the power of the moneylender, and the caprices of nature on which ultimately the harvest depends. But never for a moment do we feel that the author is instructing us at the cost of the story itself. Not a sentence, not a word, seems out of place.

I HAVE WRITTEN enthusiastically about Alice Perrin in my Introductions to *Stories from the Raj* (1982) and *More Stories from the Raj and After* (1986). She writes precisely and with great charm and sophistication. In "The Rise of Ram Din" and "The Centipede", she offers brilliant satiric portraits of the English and the Indians. Without revealing any of her own biases, she brings the two races into contact and allows them to settle their differences.

In "Justice" and "The White Tiger", she reveals the Indian fondness for duplicity and intrigue. No justice is done in "Justice", for the English judge cannot comprehend how any man, "black or white", would murder his own mother to be avenged on his neighbour—as indeed had happened. In "The White Tiger", a villager, Kowta, steals the mangled body of his half-brother, Mar Singh, to use it as a bait to kill the famed tiger and claim the reward. As Kowta waits, "gazing fixedly over the sickening, twisted limbs of the mutilated body" in front of him, the tiger comes from behind and claims yet another victim. Perrin's Indian characters live up to the description to be found in a phrase of Kipling's—"half devil and half child".

Kipling's influence on Alice Perrin is particularly strong. The title of her very first collection of short stories, *East of Suez* (1901), is taken from his work and, like his, many of her stories are set in remote places. Like him, too, she is interested in the occult and the supernatural. In "Caulfield's Crime", for instance, an Englishman is haunted by a jackal that has earlier fed on the corpse of a *fakir* whom he had wantonly killed. But Perrin is rarely interested in the supernatural for its own sake. "Caulfield's Crime" focuses on what happens to an Englishman when he loses his moorings, and how India often brutalises its rulers.

The theme of brutalisation is also central to Bithia Mary Croker's "Jack Straw's Castle" and Christine Weston's "A

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Game of Halma", but finds its most extensive treatment in the portrayal of the timber merchant Ellis in George Orwell's *Burmese Days* (1934). With Orwell, however, there was a straightforward solution to the problem—get out of India and let the Indians manage their own affairs. With this solution, Perrin could never have agreed. She was a true daughter of the Raj. She never sought answers to the questions she posed in her writings.

Much of Perrin's fiction is marked by violence, sudden deaths and disasters. This comes as no surprise in a land where death from smallpox, cholera, plague, hydrophobia and snake-bite was not uncommon, and where malaria alone is estimated to have accounted for a million fatalities a year. In "Ann White" we learn something of the horrors of the Indian Mutiny and the ever-present British fear of another massacre. In "The Fakir's Island" she paints a frightening picture of the Hindu Khoom Festival (as vividly recapitulated as the 'festival of the Great Eclipse in Steel's "The Squaring of the Gods"), and the dreadful curse a *fakir* puts upon a young Englishwoman. But there is one story of quite a different kind—"Mary Jones". Its theme is exile. Mary Jones's unintelligible mutterings in Hindustani, her deathbed song and dance, made grotesque by her cracked nasal voice and withered body, speak of the exile's unrest better than any intelligible utterance.

Sara Jeannette Duncan wrote only four short stories, but in two of these she captured the emotional turmoil of the Anglo-Indian woman's life better than anything I have read. In "A Mother in India", she deals with the estrangement of parents and children—a painful concomitant of the British presence in India. (Most Anglo-Indian parents were forced to send their children to England at an early age for reasons of health and schooling, while they remained to nurse a wound which, as one mother puts it, "never heals at all".) Helena, on a visit to England to see her daughter Cecily after a separation of five years, is led to her child sleeping in a crib. "Won't you kiss her?" the child's well-meaning guardian asks the visiting mother. "I don't think I could take such an advantage of her", replies the mother. A few moments later she drops the ironic mask and admits her loss without a trace of sentimentality: "I may have been Cecily's mother in theory, but I was John's wife in fact." To choose between husband and child was the tragic lot of these women, and they knew they would have to fail either as wife or as mother.

In "The Pool in the Desert", Duncan writes of a married woman's courageous bid to recapture her youth and her sense of joy on the arid frontiers and among people who have become "sepulchres of themselves". Judy Harbottle accepts a young subaltern, Somers Chichele, "as the companion of her soul if not her body". She neither wins nor loses, but in her dignified struggle one sees the emotional trauma that Anglo-Indian women experienced. The story is a powerful rebuttal to the commonly-held notion that many Anglo-Indian women deserted their husbands during the scorching summer months to make merry with young Army officers in the Indian hills. Duncan, in a quiet tone and with ironic understatement, gives the woman's point of view—a point of view mainly absent from fiction by men writers of the Raj.

Christine Weston, the only surviving woman writer of the Raj, does not share the imperial zeal of the others. She has a deep affection for India, which she describes as a "beautiful, brown, kindly land". Her novel *Indigo* (1943), praised by E. M. Forster and often compared to *A Passage to India* (1924), provides a compassionate awareness of the social, political, racial and religious issues that dominate the subcontinent. Her delightful short stories, many of them first published in *The New Yorker* and later put together in a volume entitled *There and Then* (1947), are created from episodes taken mainly from her childhood. They are narrated from the viewpoint of a young girl in the company of her brother, and her brother and parents often appear as principal characters.

The stories are built on small happenings, but when seen through the eyes of children they grow large and haunting. In the child's perception of the world there is wonder, candour, astonishment—all of which Weston conveys admirably. But what gives the stories their unique flavour is the interplay between the children's intuitive wisdom and their limited perception. In "The Mangoes Are Gone", the children rightly surmise that Mahala, the keeper of the mango grove, has fled from shame because the mangoes were stolen. But the possibility that the household servants might have connived in the theft does not occur to them. The story works on two different planes: that of the children and that of the adult reader.

The best of Weston's stories carry a meaning far beyond the obvious. "The Mud Horse", for instance, deals with the make-believe world of children, contrasting the self-assurance and confidence of Kulloo, the six-year-old Indian boy, with the arrogance and hysteria of the slightly older white boy.

But for the perceptive reader it accomplishes something far more significant than this simple contrast: it reveals in miniature an ugly picture of the British incivility towards Indians; it exposes the infection that has poisoned relationships between the two races for generations. Kulloo and the white boy of "The Mud Horse" may well grow up to be the susceptible Vasi and the bullying white lawyer of tomorrow's "A Game of Halma"—another of Weston's disturbing stories.

Among women writers of the Raj—and there are more than those I have discussed—Christine Weston alone foreshadows the end of the Raj. Her stories such as "The Mud Horse", "A Game of Halma", and "The Devil Has the Moon" (the latter a marvellous story of British insensitivity towards Eurasians—a race they themselves had created) ask for a change in the attitude of the British rulers. And this it does as insistently as Forster's *A Passage to India*, but without the rhetorical outburst that marks the concluding pages of Forster's prophetic novel.

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Prestige & Profit

Gary Taylor's Shakespeare—By ERIC SAMS

GARY TAYLOR'S *Reinventing Shakespeare*[1] certainly delivers the promised goods, and rings many a bell. Startled citizens have answered angrily; it was not what they bargained for, and they had no wish to be disturbed. But the approach is indeed bold and stimulating, as the blurb claims, and the 450 pages are packed with detailed and often unfamiliar data, which constitute an impressive tribute to modern storage and retrieval technology. There are occasional lapses. Thus there is no reason to attribute the early *Hamlet* to "Thomas Kyd"; Pepys kept his diary in shorthand, not cipher; the important name of the Tonson family, whose role in early Shakespeare publishing is well documented here, has been omitted from the index. But in general the facts are cogently selected and processed into a coherent chronological account covering the abilities and attitudes of Shakespeare editors over the last three centuries, from Pope and Johnson to such names as Wells and Taylor. There is a parallel history of performances, adaptations, and critiques from Betterton to Eagleton. Much of this will interest the general reader (who should however be warned that Chapter 6, on conferences and controversies, is about academic studies and chairs, all very far removed from the Shakespearean in the street).

The whole book expounds and exemplifies the thesis that Shakespeare is the central figure in a power-struggle for prestige and profit. His own part is purely passive; he is reinvented by each era for its own ends. The existence of other motives and factors is not denied; but nor are they seriously considered. The world of poetic and dramatic art is conceived as subordinate to fashions and trends, supposedly set and adjudicated by such abstractions as "the academic community". The vital topic of aesthetic criteria is sometimes teasingly touched upon; but Professor Taylor realises that these realms are remote from his own fields of interest and competence. Instead of philosophical reflection, we are offered the source-material for a class project, complete with copious and lively comments and illustrations. Shakespeare is nothing like as good and important as he is cracked up to be: discuss.

The package aims to displease, or at least to provoke, and hence to gain wide publicity. Thus the main thesis is once again proved. This particular reinvention topped the best-selling non-fiction list for a time, and was warmly received by the popular press as novel, salutary, and instructive.

So it is, and diverting too. Everyone enjoys iconoclasm, except idolaters. Gary Taylor's viewpoint finds and identifies feet of clay overlooked by most other observers.

> "Shakespeare does not seem to have struggled, to have been outraged or oppressed by the confines of his times; and without such struggle facility becomes facile, the poet contracting to a mere technician of language."

This expression of personal belief in the socio-political function of poetry is as permissible for Taylor as for Tolstoy; and Shakespeare's failure as a progressive artist follows logically enough, once the unargued assumption is accepted. But it levels downwards; and the up-market pundits rejected it, with a ferocity unparalleled in my experience. Not even A. L. Rowse has aroused such rage and resentment. "Pseudo-Marxism . . . self-conceit . . . puerility . . . posturing . . . junk scholarship" were among the many brickbats hurled. So massive a fund of ill-will must surely owe much to professional jealousy.

The young Gary Taylor was taken in by the *Oxford Shakespeare*, and soon took over. He became Joint General Editor at the age of thirty-one, in 1984. By 1987, with the publication of his *Textual Companion*, he stood revealed as the brains behind the entire Oxford edition's canon, chronology and criteria. Unfortunately (as I have publicly and repeatedly pointed out without a word of rational rejoinder), its resulting 2,000 pages are so catastrophically misconceived as to be good for little but pulping and recycling. Senior professionals such as Steven Urkowitz, Brian Vickers, and Paul Werstine have also noticed and reported (in *The Shakespeare Newsletter*, *Review of English Studies*, and *Shakespeare Quarterly* respectively) that something is ominously amiss with the Oxford approach. Its treatment of dissenters is especially invidious; thus the work of the rival Cambridge editor, Philip Edwards, is dismissed as worthless trash. That vendetta is pursued in this book also. Its author overtly relies on the prestige attached to "the most thoroughly-researched edition ever published". He feels assured of its "predictable profitability", and seeks to trade on its presumed success.

AND, IN PRINCIPLE, why not? He has been hailed as Gary Superstar in *The Times Literary Supplement*. No one should grudge his glitter, or any gold that may be going. Let market forces decide. By the same token, though, let sellers as well as buyers beware. The Oxford spec shares are already tumbling, because of what Professor Taylor himself calls the current crisis of Shakespeare scholarship, in which he claims

[1] *Reinventing Shakespeare*. By GARY TAYLOR. The Hogarth Press, £18.00.

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he claims to have played some part. He is too modest; he has caused it. Everyone who bothers to look will see that his fashionable fantasies about "memorial reconstruction", "collaboration", and so forth—obstinately reasserted as facts in this book—are themselves reinventions of exactly the kind he describes.

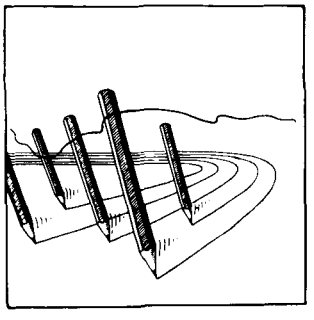
Yet the academic reviewers cannot bring themselves to believe that any justified criticism of the brash young American author, on whom they instinctively look down, must also apply to the experienced Oxford editor, to whom they instinctively look up. Indeed, William Scammell in *The Listener* was disposed to deny this self-evident identity. In *Reinventing Shakespeare*, we are told, Taylor's evidence is "partial, one-sided, deliberately incomplete or wrenched out of context", while his arguments are "largely compounded of rhetoric". We also hear of his "smearing" tactics. In the same breath, the Oxford Shakespeare is puffed, as though these were ideal qualifications for the academic editor.

But of course personal opinions are partial, in every sense. Autobiographical works like this volume are the right vehicle for the individual reinventing voice; scholarly editions are not. I share the down-to-earth view of the down-market press. Here is a bumper fun book, a welcome corrective to academic Bardolatry. No such claim can be made for the same author's Oxford Shakespeare.

I should declare an interest. I am rebuked in this book for my so-called aggrandising impulse, which allegedly leads me to "give Shakespeare sole credit for every play included in the First Folio" and a few others besides. I do indeed seek to restore to Shakespeare all the thousands of world-famous lines that the Oxford editors have spent ten years taking away from him and handing over to such eerie hallucinations as "X", "Y", and "George Wilkins". Yet I am smeared as "Baconian", as if I were the one disputing Shakespeare's authorship. Whatever Professor Taylor's other deficiencies, he does not lack gall.

Pupil & Master

The Berg-Schönberg Letters—By KEITH BOTSFORD



THE EPISTOLARY LIFE is unkind to artists. Writers write themselves elsewhere; musicians and painters don't always have much of a way with words; above all, artistic correspondences shed a clear and ugly light on the Grub Street part of any artistic life. The Berg-Schönberg correspondence[1] is no different in that respect. Money assumes a Kafkaesque intensity and Arnold Schönberg, ever improvident and ever expectant that others would provide, was from his earliest days that familiar figure, the writer-to-foundations. Alban Berg was his *entremetteur*: when he wasn't copying or arranging scores for his erstwhile teacher or lecturing on his work, he was arranging for Schönberg's furniture to be moved, collecting money for him, inviting him for a stay. He was a large, motherly shawl about the older man's frail shoulders.

But it is the Kafka that sticks. Dr *Hofrat* Theobald Pollak was a director in the Austrian Railroad Ministry, and wished to help Schönberg. He was, Berg writes to Schönberg in 1911:

> ". . . a strange fellow in every sense, if one can speak thus of a man whose life began with the most unparalleled deprivations and who has now . . . worked his way up so far. Such a man becomes so singular in some things that he can appear strange—indeed petty . . . . He had procured a reduced fare for you not long ago . . . and as a condition for being allowed to continue to be of assistance to you in such matters, he had *begged* you not to refund him the 2 kronen the transaction had cost him . . . . I can well understand Herr Schönberg that—in ignorance of the singular character of the man, you felt this kind of condition, seeming almost like alms to you, to be very unpleasant and that you sent him this small fee. But *he* was deeply insulted, carefully saved the 2 kronen with the slip for the deposit in 'a little box' in his desk, and constantly wondered how he could get rid of it again . . . ."

This Pollak did by handing the money back to Berg, who then had to write to Schönberg about it, and so on.

There is a kind of elementary pathos about the condition of the creative artist in this which commands attention: five dollars for a lesson from Bela Bartok in wartime New York is not so far off a two-kronen fare reduction for Schönberg in 1911. With fat faculties and fruitful foundations, one thinks those bad days gone forever. It turns out not to be so; and it is worth being reminded—as we might be from Verdi's letters (so much more businesslike, but then opera can be profitable) or Beethoven's—that money, or its lack, is as often a spur as fame.

Poor old Alban, with his *fin-de-siècle* melancholy, his feeling of forever being wrong; his fear of missing trains which made him arrive at stations an hour early; his nightmare-

[1] *The Berg-Schönberg Correspondence: Selected Letters.* Edited by JULIANE BRAND, CHRISTOPHER HAILEY, and DONALD HARRIS. Macmillan, £30.00.

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ridden Helene—the pair of them prone to being pricked by glass or the insect world; Berg dying from such; his wife surviving long to bury his manuscripts in silence . . . . Berg's Aryan sensibility, which included much time spent managing Mamma's dwindling property, was no match for the ever-to-be-feared, far feistier Arnold, a tough Jewish kid from Slovakia with his way to make.

There were class difficulties, too, just as there was an early divide between Arnold and the richer Jewish bourgeoisie: Arthur Schnitzler, Richard Englander (who wrote as Peter Altenberg, and whose postcard poems Berg set so brilliantly in his brief "minimal" period), and later Stefan Zweig. Berg's art lay in morbidity, Schönberg's in mathematics and far lustier musical pranks—he had outgrown all that romantic early stuff: until, that is, having once forsaken Judaism, he started to bristle again with religion.

The only time I saw Schönberg (I think it was with Salka Viertel in the late '40s), we had just come from the home of Franz Werfel and his wife Alma, widow of Gustav Mahler; and the writer was being, it seemed, whipped up the driveway of his house. I can remember only a peculiar, muscular, bullet-like intensity. Perhaps it was the by then bald head, the sheer roundness of Schönberg's face, its gleam, but he might as well have been an atomic particle in high velocity.

FOUR THINGS make this remarkable correspondence between Berg and Schönberg particularly fascinating. One is that it represents an extended exchange of views between two great composers, which is in itself a rarity. When the Schönberg-Webern correspondence and that between Berg and Webern are finally available, the picture of this remarkable trio should form a body of letters of great significance.

A second is that, for modern readers, it reveals a world of artistic unity and interconnection, of cross-fertilisation between the arts and between the most disparate personages, that should be the envy of us all. In this, the letter played a significant part: letters survived, and the writer knew they would. Telephones and airport meetings have now replaced the apparently irreplaceable.

Stubby pencil in hand on a swaying tram, Berg examines in detail the rehearsal difficulties for the *Gurrelieder*; things may be tough but they are real, and real things are taken seriously. A life without any free time (later, Schönberg would take up tennis and other diversions, but Berg seems to have had none but literature) still produced infinitely more leisure for reading and the exchange of ideas; the concert rather than the compact disc (preselected by estimable artists and intelligent producers with a market in mind) enabled infinitely more music to be heard, criticised, and *used*.

A third is that it gives a remarkably clear picture of the great battles joined, in Austria, Berlin and wherever, over the "second" Viennese school—the sense of embattlement, which in Schönberg reached advanced paranoia, is present in almost every line. The world is hostile; it does not recognise Schönberg's genius. Writing from America, to which he had moved in 1933, Schönberg says:

> "Eggs are even cheaper here than opinions on art, which is how it gets on a lot of people's faces, where they tend to wear it . . . conductors seem to have a particularly large quantity . . . . At best they have done *Verklärte Nacht* or one of my Bach arrangements, but most of them haven't done a single note. On the other hand, Stravinsky, Ravel, Respighi . . . are played frequently. It is not terribly different from the situation in Europe. . . ."

This tone—today we would call it whingeing—is almost totally absent in Berg: before *Wozzeck* (1923) he considered himself still unformed; after *Wozzeck* he had a reputation. Which leads to the fourth and greatest intrinsic interest of this volume: the relation of student (Berg) to teacher (Schönberg).

PROMPTED by his unhappy Lesbian sister Smaragda (who had seen an advertisement of Schönberg's in the *Neue Musikalische Presse*), Berg began studying with Schönberg in 1904, when he was nineteen. It was a meeting of one autodidact with another. Berg had by then written some 80 songs but, as Schönberg wrote of him in 1949:

> "When Alban Berg came to me in 1904, he was a very tall youngster and extremely timid. But when I saw the compositions he showed me—songs in a style between Hugo Wolf and Brahms—I recognised at once that he was a real talent. Consequently I accepted him as a pupil, though at the time he was unable to pay me my fee. Later his mother inherited a great fortune . . . ."

In a 1910 letter to Emil Hertzka, founder of Universal Edition, the great Viennese publishing house, Schönberg describes Berg:

> ". . . the state he was in when he came to me was such that his imagination apparently could not work on anything but *Lieder*. Even his piano accompaniments to them were song-like in style. He was absolutely incapable of writing an instrumental movement or inventing an instrumental theme . . . ."

Schönberg had begun with the violin, was forced to leave

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school when his father died (the young Arnold was barely fifteen), and was writing music—without formal training—before he was twelve. He didn't really undertake a serious musical education until he started to work with Alexander von Zemlinsky, himself only three years older than Schönberg (and subsequently his brother-in-law). For such a formidable musical theoretician, author of the *Harmonielehre*, this was a late beginning and shows the extent of his intellectual and artistic powers. That they were more powerful, disciplined and whole than Berg's, this correspondence makes evident; equally plain is that they were less affective, less expressive, and less accessible.

UNFORTUNATELY, WE HAVE no record of those early years of Berg's training: Schönberg didn't start keeping his pupil's letters until mid-1911. Then the tone is immediately established: Berg is the petitioner, the disciple; Schönberg the easily-offended master. When Berg fails in his absolute duty to worship at the master's feet on a mid-summer trip back to Vienna in 1911, Berg has to invoke the severity of his asthma for this apparent slight:

> ". . . [my asthma] hasn't improved at all and torments me every night, thus merely giving me, the insomniac, more time to dwell on the unhappy thought that I had to leave Vienna still conscious I am not back in your favour . . . . I can never succeed in explaining my odd behaviour in not coming to see you right away . . . there was no coldness, no indifference in this apparent negligence, since I suffered so terribly at being unable to visit you immediately . . . this suffering alone would have done more to convince you of my absolute and unbounded loyalty than the joy I always experience when permitted to visit you . . . ."

As the record of a student-teacher relationship, Berg's side of this absorbing correspondence is uniquely passionate, romantic and filial. That raises a number of questions—of which perhaps the most interesting, but the least easy to resolve, is the status of the pupil who outstrips the master. In terms of musical achievement the question does not need to be discussed, for only subjective judgments can apply. Obviously, Schönberg was naturally the more rigorous in applying the rules he himself had created, and by so doing, is rightly regarded as the more "revolutionary" musician of the two, with Webern as his closest "disciple". Berg is the composer who strayed furthest from the indicated path, and the one who has survived the best, principally because his two operas—*Wozzeck* and *Lulu*—are part of the standard repertory.

Schönberg's talents as a teacher can hardly be underestimated. Besides Berg and Webern, countless other first-class musicians and composers passed through his hands—Egon Wellesz, Marc Blitzstein, and Walter Goehr, to name but some. In most cases, we are talking of "teaching" in a much higher sense than merely "instruction": Schönberg positively invited discipleship, and most of his students accepted. And yet . . . . The point is, his "method" was the exact opposite of that notion, both by the avowal of his own students and by his many remarks on teaching technique.

Having failed to acquire Engelbert Humperdinck or Max Reger to teach composition, the President of the Vienna Music Academy, Wilhelm Bopp, pleaded as follows: "Let us try Schönberg and so let a little fresh air into the stifling life of the composition school." Dr Kraus, a lawyer who took part in Schönberg's harmony classes, reported as follows:

> "Schönberg lectures freely, without any notes, his speech is fluent, his lecturing very rich in examples . . . . His aim is to arouse in his pupils pleasure in independent thought and creation; he also demands that every step in harmony should have an inner motivation . . . . [He] never speaks about himself and his compositions."

In a letter to Robert Hutchins at the University of Chicago, Schönberg suggests that:

> "The student should be able to produce an image in his mind of the manner in which music should sound when perfectly played. In order to produce this image he should not use the corrupting influence of an instrument . . . . He will be trained to notice all the differences between his image and the real playing . . . . His training in the mechanical fields should help him to correct acoustic shortcomings . . . a great advantage over present methods where engineers have no idea of music and musicians have no idea of the techniques of mechanics."

Independence of the creative spirit from the critical and magisterial, training of the ear and the eye (not for nothing was Schönberg considerably more than a dilettante as a painter), a firm understanding of how music is produced *acoustically*: these are the foundations. But Schönberg's relations with his pupils, and especially Alban Berg, went well beyond that.

THE RELATIONSHIP between the two men falls roughly into three parts. From 1904 to 1911, Berg is subservient. From then until 1923—Berg's *annus mirabilis*—it is Schönberg who is put on the defensive. Thereafter, and until Berg's death in 1935, the relation is one of peers bound by affection not taxed by proximity (Schönberg was in Berlin, and then emigrated to America), and thereby freed of a monstrous incubus.

The distancing between the two men took its own time and its own form, but the moment of the "rupture" is recorded in a remarkable letter of Berg's to his beloved master, written from Vienna late in November 1915. In his excellent biography of Berg (1975), Morris Carno argues that the origins of the split lay in a trip that Alban and Helene Berg made to Berlin in early June 1913, during which "Schönberg discussed with him the two works written since he had left his master—the Altenberg Songs and the Four Clarinet Pieces, which he criticised so severely that the memory of it reverberated in Berg's mind for several years to come". Berg indeed does write, on 14 June:

> "You will surely understand . . . that into these most beautiful memories of untroubled enjoyment [a rehearsal

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of *Pierrot Lunaire*], there intrude memories of the last afternoon with its depressing truths."

In his 1915 letter, however, Berg makes it plain that the rift between them is of longer date:

> "The first time I noticed your dissatisfaction with me was during the Amsterdam trip [November 1912] . . . . You had diagnosed an artistic 'flagging' and 'slackening off' in me at that time. On the basis of false and malicious reports from my sister and her girl friend, you had no choice but to think that this slackening was due to total dependence on my relatives and those of my wife . . . . That led to my most earnest endeavour: to change. To do better! First of all: To achieve complete independence from my wife's family . . . no more involvement in family quarrels . . . . Then: To change those many small things about me to which you rightfully object, like the illegible handwriting, rambling letter style, negligent dress, etc. . . . Finally, I naturally took to heart your criticism of the insignificance and worthlessness of my new compositions . . . .
>
> I am telling you this [Berg continues some pages later] not to rake up old stories or even to reproach you . . . . But only to beg you to try to understand my situation a little. To try to understand what I've gone through these last four years [i.e., since 1911, the year in which Berg stopped being a "student"] when forced to see your affection slowly and inexorably ebb, even though I tried and tried to please you; when—while trying to correct one mistake—I always unwittingly committed another; when I finally had to recognise that you hated, or at least were annoyed by, everything I did or anything at all to do with me . . . ."

The model here—and, I suspect, the basis for the relationship so painfully detailed in this correspondence—selective, and brilliantly edited and annotated—is psychoanalysis. Freud, whose Vienna years paralleled Berg's and Schönberg's, is nowhere that I can find mentioned in Schönberg's letters, although both Berg and Anton von Webern were intimately familiar with the theories and practice of psychoanalysts. Webern consulted one in 1913 and Berg, at first sceptical, found Webern's treatment to have been "very plausible and sympathetic". In 1923, his wife Helene underwent some analytic treatment at Bad Gastein, and Berg protested. Had she been in need of such treatment, his pupil Theodor Adorno relates, Berg would have consulted "Professor Freud or Dr Alfred Adler, whom we have known very well for many years". (Adler, in fact, saw Berg for his asthma, and concluded that it had a psychological origin.)

Part of Schönberg's criticism of Berg's music at this crucial period seems to have been of its "sadness"; and indeed Berg was a classical case of melancholia and depression. Wilhelm Reich notes that Berg often emphasised, as Carno reports, "the relation of music to Freudian depth-psychology in the sense that it was the function of music to be the representation and illumination of the unconscious".

In this light, Berg's "middle period" in his relations with Schönberg seems a classic instance of the analyst's persistent attempt to distance himself from his over-involved patient. The letter in question is full of useful clues:

> "I was still confident that you did not actually dislike me and I foolishly believed that, as far as humanly possible, I had done my duty. . . ."

A little later, he says:

> ". . . can you wonder that I, who invariably tend to think I'm wrong anyway, invariably perceive everything I strive for with such profound yearning to be a failure—that I fall into a state of complete despair and helplessness, no longer able to trust my opinion at all . . . . I can't explain it to you any other way."

If music is an expression of the subconscious—and Schönberg the mentor worked with extraordinary diligence to free, in each of his pupils, the particular mental notations of their private, essential musics—it would seem that he was practising a form of analysis in which music and creation were the therapy, the ultimate release. Dependence and liberation, the fear of loss, transference: it is all here—much as it is, musically, in those two extraordinarily lavish, ecstatic portrayals of neurosis, despair, and death: *Wozzeck* and *Lulu*.

In Those Days

You could hear voices three streets away,
distant dog barks, the continental
express Doppler-mad for Parkeston Quay.
Sounds were framed, spaced on a long wall
of silence, tiniest rustles magnified
in isolation and the brewery's eight o'clock
siren a breakfast table jack-in-the-box
who hailed us a bluff good morning. We didn't need
the church clock booming the hour. Days
had shapes, like trees. A hunch was as good as a watch
for summer afternnons when the scented peace
of a cool room could be ripped by a panicking wasp.
And we retired to the day's last heart-beats,
familiar footsteps fading down the street.

A. H. Snow

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Books Encountered

The Mistinguett Legend. By DAVID BRET. Robson Books, £16.95.

Illustrated, gossipy, but unindexed and unbibliographied biography of Jeanne Bourgeois, whose songs, stage career, and love affairs did so much to belie her original surname. As show-biz lives go, this is erudite: it includes a discography. Records, thin and scratchy, barely convey Mistinguett's vitality. This book does.

Russian Nationalism: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow. By STEPHEN K. CARTER. Pinter Publishers, £29.50.

Scholarly, pessimistic study of the perennial defensiveness that has little to do with ideology and has recently produced some extremist groups, the best known being *Pamyat'*. "If Gorbachov fails", concludes Dr Carter, "and a regime sympathetic to *Pamyat'* succeeds him in power, Armageddon may be much nearer than we think."

Images of Woman in Literature. By DAVID HOLBROOK. New York University Press, $35.00.

Bitch/goddess, whore/virgin, mother/stepmother, good fairy/wicked witch—the dichotomies are as familiar as the ambivalence of the emotions. Dr Holbrook, buttressed by his customary referees (Winnicott and Guntrip in particular), aptly analyses the contradictions, notably in Shakespeare (gradually resolved) and J. M. Barrie (not).

The Oxford Illustrated History of Medieval Europe. Edited by GEORGE HOLMES. Oxford University Press, £9.95.

Bargain paperbacking of an attractive piece of *haute vulgarisation*. It suffers only slightly from being a compilation by seven hands (including the editor's), and has a useful chronology and bibliography: but there are many omissions—Bonaventure, Bacon, Humbert, Cerularius, simony, schism (barely noted among the dates).

Ford Madox Ford. By ALAN JUDD. Collins, £16.95.

Big, fat, juicy biography of big, fat, juicy writer, whose best book was *The Good Soldier*, but whose "Tietjens" quartet has a certain forlorn nobility. Friend and helper of Pound, Joyce, Hemingway, Conrad, Lawrence, and Henry James, he wrote less well and far too much: but this book wonderfully explores his intelligent eccentricity.

Music of Another World. By SZYMON LAKS. Translated by CHESTER S. KISIEL. Northwestern University Press, $24.95, paper $10.95.

Astonishing addition to *littérature concentrationnaire*: the story of the Auschwitz orchestra, by its conductor. A spiritual aid? No, says the canny author: a practical help to survival. Brutal *SS* guards could turn emotional at familiar tunes. Hope for humanity or unsurprising sentimentality? Perhaps both.

Soviet Disunion: A History of the Nationalities Problem in the USSR. By BOHDAN NAHAYLO and VICTOR SWOBODA. Hamish Hamilton, £20.00.

Immensely timely, well-documented study of the non-Russian half of the USSR, with handy maps. The authors are less gloomy about *Pamyat'* than Dr Carter (above); but they find that "genuine democratisation and the preservation of empire, however disguised, are incompatible". Break-up? Confederation? "Yugoslavisation"? Russian takeover? No bets.

Comedy: An Introduction to Comedy in Literature, Drama and Cinema. By T. G. A. NELSON. Oxford University Press, £19.50, paper £6.95.

Sprinkled with enough jokes to disarm fears of donnish pomposity, this tours the expected subjects: marriage, sex, death, crime, folly, language, fantasy, etc., and adds thoughts on carnival and feminist disquiet at sexist humour. But it leaves out far too much, including the Marx Brothers, Laurel and Hardy, and Jacques Tati.

Haydn and the Valve Trumpet. By CRAIG RAINE. Faber, £20.00.

The title is from the title piece, about reviewers' howlers: not a feature of the sparkling 68 literary articles collected here as "essays". They succeed best when subverting conventional verdicts—on Douanier Rousseau (not great but good), on Betjeman's supposed "religiosity". Enjoyably waspish on fellow critics.

Japanese Cinema: An Introduction. By DONALD RICHIE. Oxford University Press, £6.95.

Learned, very brief survey which purports to guide Westerners through the cultural assumptions underlying films liable to misunderstanding without such knowledge. But it rather sacrifices this, and stylistic analysis, to a chronological narrative, only occasionally lifting the veil. Helpful, therefore, but limited.

The Blackwell Biographical Dictionary of British Political Life in the Twentieth Century. Edited by KEITH ROBBINS. Basil Blackwell, £49.95.

A two-column tome as mammoth as its title, with authors brilliantly chosen: several summarise their own full-length biographies; the editor supplies 44. Up-to-date, it includes John Major; eclectic, it has spies, journalists, and Irishmen; bright, it tells jokes like Margot Asquith on F. E. Smith: "His brains sometimes go to his head."

The Politics of Literary Reputation: The Making and Claiming of 'St George' Orwell. By JOHN RODDEN. Oxford University Press, £22.50, $27.50.

The blurb makes large claims for this, by a teacher of Rhetoric at the University of Virginia; but to Britons it may seem a re-run of old disputes. The author recalls Leopold Labedz's ENCOUNTER analysis of the attempted Left-wing takeover, but alleges a symmetrical Right-wing bid. Orwell would have snorted.

Traces of Another Time: History and Politics in Postwar British Fiction. By MARGARET SCANLON. Princeton University Press, $27.50.

A sideways look at sideways looks at politics—by Iris Murdoch, Elizabeth Bowen, J. G. Farrell, Kim Philby and other spy fictioneers, Paul Scott, Doris Lessing, and Anthony Burgess. The themes are Ireland, treason, and the Apocalypse. The tone is crisp, ironical, erudite, amused, and the product of extensive reading.

A. A. Milne: His Life. By ANN THWAITE. Faber, £17.50.

Marvellously comprehensive and sympathetic account of a complex, serious, humorous, talented, hard-working man—much more than the author of the *Pooh* books. Mrs Thwaite deals frankly and tactfully with Milne's son's problems as the original of Christopher Robin; and she quotes to great effect. A masterly portrait of an age.

James Baldwin: Artist on Fire. By W. J. WEATHERBY. Michael Joseph, £17.99.

Affectionate portrait by a writer and journalist who knew him well: it successfully recreates what Baldwin himself called "a very tight, tense, lean, abnormally ambitious, abnormally intelligent, and hungry black cat". But it could use a proper bibliography, as well as more analytical criticism of the books.

R.M.

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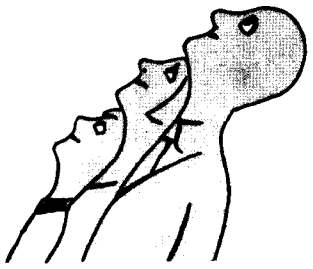
CONTROVERSY

Three Concepts of Racism

"Anti-Racism", Prejudice (and worse)—By ANTONY FLEW

"I want to be a man on the same basis and level as any white citizen—I want to be as free as the whitest citizen. I want to exercise, and in full, the same rights as the white American. I want to be eligible for employment exclusively on the basis of my skills and employability, and for housing solely on my capacity to pay. I want to have the same privileges, the same treatment in public places as every other person. . . ."

DR RALPH BUNCHE **(the first black American to serve as, among many other things, US Permanent Representative at the UN).**



WHAT is racism? And why should we abominate racists? It should be obvious that these two fundamental questions ought to be both asked and answered before anyone either denounces some particular person as "a racist" or puts forward policies supposedly intended to combat racism in general. But the truth is that today they are two questions very rarely either asked or answered. Instead the word "racist", like the word "fascist", has become—especially for those most eager to employ it—a vehemently emotive term of abuse, but one with precious little if any determinate descriptive meaning.

It is, for instance, significant that when the National Union of Students first adopted its now notorious "*No Platform!*" policy, it was whomsoever the local militants might choose to denounce as racists and/or fascists who were to be prevented from speaking in any institution of tertiary education within the United Kingdom. It is equally significant that the supporters and implementers of this "*No Platform!*" policy never provide definitions enabling us to determine either *whether* and of precisely *what* those to be forcibly silenced are guilty, or why guilt on these counts deserves to be treated as egregiously heinous.

1. Racism as Unjust Discrimination. Once, however, we do put and press the two straight questions with which I began, it becomes quite obvious that if racism is to be deservedly condemned as wicked, then it must be a kind of bad behaviour rather than a sort of false or otherwise disfavoured belief about matters of supposed fact. This first point remains both true and crucial even after we have gone on to recognise that, with this as with other kinds, there are those who will attempt to justify bad behaviour by appealing to various matters of actual or alleged fact.

"Racism", therefore, should be defined as the advantaging or disadvantaging of someone for no other or better reason than that they belong to one particular racial set and not another. The reason for writing "sets" is that this word does not carry the unwanted implications of "group", "class", or "community". For, by Cantor's "Axiom for Sets", the sole essential feature of a set is that its members share at least one characteristic, any kind of characteristic.

Those who insist upon talking of blacks or of any other racially defined set as "a community" are thereby suggesting that the people concerned actually do see themselves—and presumably that it is *acceptable* for them to continue to see themselves—as members of a racially defined and racially exclusive (or excluded) set. And that, in this first (and recommended) understanding, is itself paradigmatically racist talk. It should be recalled, much more often than it is, that the universally condemned charter policies of the Nationalist Party in South Africa were all policies to promote racially separate development in racially exclusive local communities . . . *apartheid* being the Afrikaans for apartness.

Given this first and recommended understanding of the word "racism" it is easy to appreciate why racism is morally wrong. Manifestly, it is morally wrong precisely and only because it is unjust. The injustice does not consist in treating different people in different ways, and hence unequally; but in treating differently, and hence unequally, people who themselves are *in all relevant respects* the same.[1] The crucial term here is, of course, "relevant". For the defining characteristics by which one race is to be distinguished from another— skin pigmentation, shape of skull, etc—are strictly superficial and properly irrelevant to all, or almost all,[2] ques-

[1] It would be—or, since it is nowadays frequently done, perhaps I should say that it is—preposterous to equate justice with equality. No system of criminal justice, for instance, could survive a requirement to treat offenders in exactly the same way as non-offenders.

[2] The trifling qualification "or almost all" does perhaps need to be included lest we be called upon to condemn some theatre director casting *Othello* for selecting for the name-part a black actor while refusing to hire to play Desdemona an otherwise well-qualified but black actress.

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tions of social status and employability. To accord decisive weight to differences in respect of any such strictly surface and trifling physical characteristics, when you are making discriminatory decisions the senses of which matter to the individuals concerned, is as grotesquely unfair as to disqualify competing candidates because they are bald, or blond, or red-headed.

2. **Racism as involving Heretical Beliefs.** It is difficult to discover any really satisfactory explication of what I want to distinguish as the second concept of racism. But in 1965 the US Department of Labor issued a bold statement of (part of) the corresponding concept of anti-racism:

> "Intelligence potential is distributed among Negro infants in the same proportion and pattern as among Icelanders or Chinese, or any other group. . . . There is absolutely no question of any genetic differential."[3]

Again, when in 1989 a near unanimous Faculty Senate of the City University of New York denounced their philosopher-colleague Michael Levin, and dissociated themselves from his "abhorrent racist utterances", what he had said, in the final paragraph of an article in *Quadrant*, the Australian monthly journal, was that *on average* in IQ tests blacks score 15 points lower than whites (and hence lower still than members of such racial sets as Chinese and Japanese).

Clearly, too, it was this same second concept which misguided all those who engaged in the great coast-to-coast hounding of Arthur Jensen. He was a Professor of Psychology in the University of California at Berkeley who in 1969 published, in the *Harvard Educational Review*, an heretical article asking "How Much Can We Boost IQ and Scholastic Achievement?"

Part of the spillover in Britain of that Jensen uproar was the Penguin publication of an "Education Special" which promised to sort out our ideas of *Race, Culture and Intelligence*.[4] In their introduction the Editors proclaimed:

> "In planning this book we have attempted to step back from the debate itself and look at the concepts which underlie it. This involves a close examination of the key ideas—intelligence, race, heredity, environment. . . ."

Whatever their actual intentions may have been, and although they certainly deployed a deal of rasping polemic against whomever and whatever they chose to pillory as "racists" and "racism", neither of the two Editors (nor any of the other contributors) made any attempt to define that key word, or to distinguish race from culture.

That distinction is here absolutely crucial. For, while our races are unequivocally determined by our genes, our cultures (in so far as they are determined at all) are determined by our environments. Cultures may, therefore, be shared by people of different races. So a society may either be bi-cultural or even multi-cultural without being multi-racial, or be multi-racial without being multi-cultural. (It was, indeed, an essential element in the authentically racist teachings of Adolf Hitler's National-Socialist German Workers' Party that German high culture could not be either produced or properly shared by those not of the right race.)

IF WE LOOK AT what those condemned in *Race, Culture and Intelligence* had actually said—something which the contributors were noticeably disinclined to do—it becomes obvious what it is which guaranteed their condemnation. Anyone suggesting that there might be, even "on average", any substantial differences, hereditarily determined and occupationally relevant, between members of different racial sets was by that same single token guilty of the new unpardonable sin.

But any definition of the term "racism" which requires the anti-racist to repudiate categorically all such suggestions should be put down as altogether unacceptable and obnoxious. For so defining the word makes racism, in the most literal sense, a heresy. Heretics are anathematised not for what they do or fail to do—but simply for holding what are alleged to be false beliefs.[5] And if this is what racism is to be, then we are left with no warrant for denouncing the racist as wicked. Of what moral fault are these heretics supposed to be guilty—always, of course, providing that their convictions result from honest, open-minded, truth-directed, critical enquiry? (Anyone engaged in education ought to be not only especially reluctant thus to anathematise heresies but also peculiarly sensitive to the importance of that often omitted proviso.)

Of course there are those—although their number does not include either Arthur Jensen or Michael Levin—who are inclined to use unsound arguments in order to derive discriminatory conclusions from such heretical and would-be factual beliefs. Here the favourite forms of argument are doubly fallacious. For—quite apart from the so-called Naturalistic Fallacy of pretending to deduce normative (*ought*) conclusions from neutrally descriptive (*is*) premises—it remains manifestly impossible to deduce a conclusion about *any* particular individual member of some set from propositions stating *only* the average characteristics of that set as a whole. Anyone may always be "the odd one out"—a member of a minority way above, or way below, whatever is the average for the whole set.

These invalid arguments, of which several contributors to *Race, Culture and Intelligence* were clients, and to which so many other people apparently remain still in thrall, truly deserve to be put down as "fallacies of racism". For it is these genuine logical fallacies rather than the heretical beliefs over which, under this misdescription, those con-

[3] One remarkable curiosity in this area of vehement discussion is the strength of conviction of certain distinguished Marxian biologists. They seem eager to insist that the facts of this (as they believe) uncreated Universe must actually be as they would, no doubt, have been had the Creator been guided by their own dearest wishes.

[4] K. Richardson and D. Spears (eds), *Race, Culture and Intelligence* (Penguin, 1973).

[5] Admirers of the late Professor Sidney Hook will recall his *Heresy, Yes. Conspiracy, No* (1953), a book written to enforce the crucial importance of this distinction.

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tributors thought to triumph that should be thus categorised. Anyone sincerely concerned to eliminate racism—in that first, recommended, sense in which racism is indeed a manifest moral wrong—must be concerned to demonstrate the fallaciousness of these classical logical fallacies. For it is, to put it no stronger, recklessly imprudent to allow, whether explicitly or only tacitly, that if the facts are *not* as the US Department of Labor so confidently and so categorically asserted them to be, *then* racially discriminatory behaviour will suddenly become morally justifiable.[6]

3. How "Anti-Racism" Can Institutionalise Racism. The third concept of racism, which should probably be interpreted as somehow containing the second, seems to have been developed in Britain during the late 1970s by the Institute of Race Relations, sponsors of the revealingly entitled journal *Race and Class*. It has now become the key concept misguiding most of the activities of what Peter Simple in London's *Daily Telegraph* satirically dubbed "The Race Relations Industry". But it has not yet, so far as I know, been taken up in any other country; although there are, surely, some parallels with the Reverend Jesse Jackson's project for a "Rainbow Coalition"?

The formulation quoted below is to be found in the documents already issued in Britain by several Local Education Authorities, while "multi-cultural" and "anti-racist" policies based upon this formulation have now been specifically and enthusiastically commended in the *Report* of the official Swann Committee:[7]

> "There are certain routine practices, customs and procedures in our society whose consequence is that black people have poorer jobs, health, housing and life-chances than do the white majority. . . . These practices and customs are maintained by relations and structures of power, and are justified by centuries-old beliefs and attitudes which hold that black people are essentially inferior to white people—biologically, or culturally, or both. 'Racism' is a shorthand term for this combination of discriminatory practices, unequal relations and structures of power, and negative beliefs and attitudes. . . ."

After presenting this definition the Inner London Education Authority, which was until its recent dissolution by far the largest of all the LEAs, added a satire-defying disclaimer: "In using the term 'black' it is not the Authority's intention to exclude any minority group." It then proceeded to list, among those whom it thus did not intend to exclude, Cypriots, homosexuals, and the Irish.[8] In view of the inclination of all Hard-Left factions to identify with the PLO, it may be significant that among the minority groups not to be excluded there was no mention of Jews. It most certainly is significant that it was ILEA whose "multi-cultural" and "anti-racist" policies the *Swann Report* picked out for special commendation!

The word "black" in this third definition is always redefined to include "both Afro-Caribbean *and* Asian", while "Afro-Caribbean" itself is extended to include all and only those previously rated black. For, we are told, "The word 'black' emphasises the common experience which both Afro-Caribbean and Asian people have of being victims of racism, and their common determination to oppose racism. . . ."

Before proceeding to examine this third conception of racism, I need to reveal the reasons for introducing those stipulative redefinitions of words and expressions referring to particular racial sets. One of these is made manifest by ILEA's curiously catholic addendum. The main object of the whole exercise is to construct a winning multi-coloured political coalition of minorities which may, it is hoped, be persuaded to see themselves as constitutionally and permanently aggrieved and alienated.

The other reason is, as it has to be, concealed. For it is—by lumping all non-whites together into a single set—to hide both the often very considerable differences between the educational and other track records of different racial sub-sets,[9] and the sometimes fierce mutual hostilities between some of these sub-sets. For only so long as these achievement differences and mutual animosities can be hidden, and their significance in consequence ignored, will it remain possible to pretend that all educational under-achievement in any such racial sub-set—as well as any other disadvantage or misfortune—must be mainly, if not entirely, due to a "racism" which is always and exclusively white. Except in so far as this deception is successfully achieved it becomes more difficult to forge the desired "Rainbow Coalition" of the Disinherited.

The first objection to the third definition is that it refuses

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[6] A related point was made by Melvin J. Lasky in his *Africa for Beginners* (1962) when, arguing against the Left historians who derive their "anti-racism" from allegations about the high cultural achievements of ancient African civilisations, he wrote:

> ". . . I would much prefer equal treatment and political rights to be argued from 'the brotherhood of man' than from dubious theses of ancient cultural achievement, for I am appalled at the implication that if Africans had no glorious past behind them they would somehow be ineligible for freedom and fraternity."

[7] *Education for All: The Report of the Committee of Enquiry into the Education of Children from Ethnic Minority Groups* (HMSO, 1985).

[8] I am reminded of a production of a Brendan Behan play in the Abbey Theatre in Dublin, in which one actor paraded with a poster proclaiming the message: "KEEP IRELAND BLACK!"

[9] Researchers working for the Inner London Education Authority have reported that it is only Afro-Caribbean and Bangladeshi pupils who are, on average, under-achieving educationally—whereas the other Asian sub-sets are performing significantly better than both the general and the white average. Commenting upon these findings in an article on "The Education Maze" (*New Society*, 21 August 1987) Dr Bhikhu Parekh, Deputy Chairman of the Commission for Racial Equality, stubbornly insisted that such findings raise "fascinating puzzles about the impact of racism on children".

Parekh's reaction may remind us of "Hastie's Law" which, named for a man who spent most of his working life in the service of ILEA, reads:

> "The incidence of alleged racism in a given society will vary in direct proportion to the numbers of people paid and positioned to discover and to combat racism."

Or, in a more popular formulation: "Never ask a barber whether you need a haircut!"

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to recognise any racism save that of hostile discrimination by whites against non-whites. Since many British classrooms contain children of Ugandan Asians, victims of the racist policies of the unspeakable Idi Amin—and since everyone with experience of those multi-racial classrooms can recall cases both of black children insulting whites or Asians as such, and of Asians generally hostile to blacks—this refusal is bound to raise questions about both the suitability, and indeed the sincerity, of the consequently proposed policies for "anti-racist education".

Such suspicions of bad faith are abundantly confirmed by the discovery that Professor Chris Mullard, a black educator who, until his recent move to Amsterdam, played a major part in formulating and enforcing supposedly anti-racist policies in the British educational world,[10] repeatedly and publicly made vehemently anti-white pronouncements. Thus, in the Preface to his *Black Britain* (1973) he tells us that:

> ". . . all the time I was writing. . . I found not solace, comfort or tolerance, but tension, a . . . desire to break, smash, riot, to bellow; 'Whitey! One day you'll have to pay! . . ."

The second objection is that this definition makes racism, at least at the outset, a characteristic of social institutions rather than individual behaviours. But, in the true sense explained earlier, racism—like the violent causing of gross bodily harm—is essentially intentional. Both are for that very reason peculiarly repellent. For which of us does not feel more indignant about an injury deliberately inflicted than about an injury which no one intended?

THE THIRD OBJECTION is that this is a definition in terms of consequences. For in so far as it is in terms of consequences, and only consequences, we are left without sufficient or indeed any reason for execrating racism as a *moral* abomination. Absent any hostile discriminatory intention, why ought we to deplore the fact, if it is a fact, that "in our society" non-white people have poorer jobs, health, housing, and life-chances than do the white majority?

Of course we may well deplore the fact that any group of people, white or non-white, are worse off than the majority in Western society; and therefore devote ourselves to reforms and adjustments in the spirit of equalisation. But to deplore that fact, and to devote ourselves to changing it, is very different from discriminating in favour of a racially defined subset out of the total set of all those worse off than the majority. For to act in that way is not comprehensively, nor perhaps commendably, egalitarian. It is instead paradigmatically racist.

Furthermore, given a definition of this purely consequential kind, given too that for some reason unstated racism is still to be public enemy number one, then sooner or later we are going to be asked to go further down this road—to condemn and abandon anything and everything the actual effects of which are that the racial "representation" in any social set is substantially different from that in the population-as-a-whole. If there are x% of blacks and y% of browns (and/or yellows) in the population as a whole, then there will have to be x% of blacks and y% of browns in every profession, class, team, area, or what-have-you. Anything, but anything, which stands in the way of this proposed ideal will have to be boycotted, illegalised, de-platformised, done away with. . . .

In particular, as these documents presented to unprotesting British educators actually go on to say, we shall by accepting such a redefinition be committed to dismantling all "tests and other criteria"—even the fairest and most perfectly colour-blind—if and when these have revealed one racial set to be performing better than another.[11]

If and in so far as any authority does proceed to introduce new tests and criteria deliberately designed to satisfy this pretended "anti-racist" requirement, then it will not only be betraying its educational trust by debauching standards but will also be practising unjust racial discrimination (in the true sense first defined). For such new "tests and other criteria" will have been specifically designed by reference to the *racial* set membership of those subjected thereto.

Thus the introduction of this concept of "institutionalised racism", together with the required rejection of everything to which it refers, combine, most paradoxically and yet altogether inescapably, to require that *racism*—in the true, first, intentional (and abhorrent) sense—be institutionalised throughout the British educational system; and indeed everywhere else, too.

[10] The authorities which called on Professor Mullard for advice in formulating their "anti-racist" policies apparently included Birmingham, Derbyshire, Hampshire, Haringey, Leicestershire, Manchester and Sheffield.

[11] Recently in his column in *The Washington Times* the distinguished (and, as it happens, black) economist Walter Williams referred to the present examinations for promotion to Sergeant in the New York City Police. These have already been revised three times, most recently at a cost of over $100,000, to remove any possible racial bias. Nevertheless, the racially defined pass marks remain 75% for whites; 69% for Hispanics; but 65% for blacks. This truly is a paradigm case of institutionalised racism.

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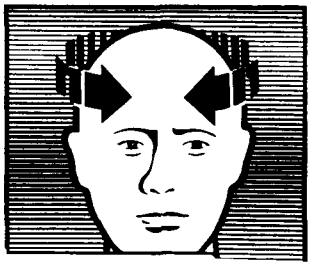
EAST & WEST

A Tale of Two Hemispheres

On Soviet Psychiatry—By T. D. Rogers



Over the past 50 years Soviet psychiatry has become preoccupied with differences between the two halves of the brain—particularly with the notion that schizophrenia is a disease of the dominant (i.e. left) cerebral hemisphere. In Leningrad last summer, visiting the Bekhterev Psychoneurological Institute, I was shown a series of slides by the Professor of Biological Psychiatry.

"Here", he began, "we see the left hemisphere switched off, and now, in this one, after treatment, the left hemisphere switched on again." The slides showed some computer graphics, supposedly representing a horizontal slice through the brain of a schizophrenic patient. Well, yes, I said, but how are these pictures produced? What is the measuring instrument exactly? "Ah, we cannot tell you that, because we have applied for a patent." I see. Well, what about the treatment? "We are applying for a patent."

Medicine as metaphor for the world is not a particularly original theme for the essayist, but as I stared at the slides of this poor patient's brain, and listened to the scientist's evasive replies, I drifted into reverie, and for a moment imagined I was looking at a slide of Mother Russia.

In the wider picture, it is of course the non-dominant (Eastern) hemisphere that has been "switched off", and in this case for 70 years. Now, we are told, it has been "switched on". But what is the evidence? Which measuring instruments are we to use? And what has been the treatment?

Again, there is a complete lack of information about how these data are obtained. The Party says that with suitable doses of openness and restructuring the Soviet Union is becoming a vibrant, dynamic world force. All that can be said with any certainty is that in a material sense, life is getting harder, and queues longer. When Siberian coal-miners went on strike to protest about the privations of their harsh existence, the Party leadership felt bound, with typical Soviet sophistry, to denounce the strikers as threatening *perestroika*, yet simultaneously to claim that their action proved the need for further doses of *perestroika*.

The inconveniences of life in the Soviet Union are neither trivial nor temporary. They are the inevitable products of a system which at every level has utterly failed. The extent and depth of this failure is so shocking to the Western observer that one wonders how Soviet citizens manage to survive at all. Truly, there, the life of man has become poor, nasty, brutish and short. And to the Western psychiatrist it is especially paining because psychiatry has so clearly played a part in the brutalising process.

Vladimir Bukovsky has described[1] how the peculiar features of the Soviet political system, the Communist ideology, the uncertainties and blurred boundaries of psychiatry, and the labyrinths of the human conscience have weirdly woven themselves together to create the monstrous phenomenon of Soviet psychiatry. Psychiatry developed in the Soviet Union as if on a desert island—its eccentricities and peculiarities were allowed to flourish, and the whole discipline has apparently lumbered off down one of those evolutionary culs-de-sac beloved of the biologist. A present-day Western observer is reminded of Darwin stumbling across those ghastly lizards in the Galapagos Islands.

It was not always so. When Peter the Great decreed the creation of special hospitals for the insane in 1723, Russia entered into a phase of rather enlightened attitudes to the mentally ill. To be sure, paternalism was the order of the day, but it was a benign and caring paternalism, and its driving force was the desire to relieve suffering. Over the succeeding two centuries Russian psychiatry developed along paths very similar to mainstream European psychiatry. Gradually it gained a voice of its own, typified by the work of the Moscow neuropsychiatrist Sergei Korsakov (1845-1900).

Today Korsakov is best known for his description of a syndrome of loss of memory associated with confabulation, grandiose ideas, and inappropriate cheerfulness (a description of the present Soviet leadership?), but at the end of the 19th century Korsakov was the central figure of a distinctive Russian school of psychiatry which sought a synthesis between neurology and psychiatry, between brain and mind. Korsakov was also among the first to advocate the end of physical restraint for psychiatric patients, liberating his own

[1] Vladimir Bukovsky, Foreword to Sidney Bloch and Peter Reddaway, *Russia's Political Hospitals* (Futura, 1978).

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patients from their strait-jackets and chains. A contemporary of Korsakov who also achieved international fame was Vladimir Bekhterev (1857-1927), appointed Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Kazan in 1885. Bekhterev pioneered the study of the brain's electrical activity, and founded the Psychoneurological Institute in Leningrad which today bears his name.

Despite the exertions of Korsakov and his peers, conditions in most Russian psychiatric hospitals slowly deteriorated in the early years of the 20th century. This was largely due to the impoverishment of the Czarist régime, rather than to any malign intention on the part of the State. In 1911 Professor Vladimir Serbsky, the chief psychiatrist in Moscow, criticised the régime for the neglect of psychiatric facilities, and especially for the appalling conditions in the city asylums. But in those unhappy times the Czarist régime had other fish to fry, and mental hospitals continued their inexorable decline. Most psychiatrists, then, must surely have welcomed the revamped public health service which followed the 1917 Revolution, and hopes must have run high that Russian psychiatry would now be able to tune in to the strange new noises coming from Western Europe.

PERHAPS FOR A WHILE it seemed as if this could be. The new régime gave funding for a large new psychiatric facility in Moscow, dedicated to research and treatment in forensic psychiatry, and they named it after the very man who had so castigated the previous government for neglecting the mentally ill—Vladimir Serbsky. But very shortly it became clear that in the strange new world of the Communist State, theories and conclusions about nature were not allowed to develop out of the raw material of everyday life. Rather, the raw material of everyday life was shaped to fit in with the ruling theory. A series of extensive purges in scientific circles rid the profession of those whose teachings contradicted Marxist ideology, and cemented the foundations of the Pavlovian school. Professor Bekhterev was one of the first to taste the bitter fruits of Stalin's harvest—poisoned by Stalin's own hand after Stalin had consulted him professionally. . . .

Party ideologists created a new Pavlovian-Marxist synthesis, and claimed that it accounted for all the vagaries and vicissitudes of human experience. Under this deterministic and mechanistic model, man's behaviour was viewed as a consequence of the pressures operating on him from society. Freudian theory was rejected for a number of reasons. Firstly, it relied too heavily on the concept of instinct, with the implication that innate differences might exist between individuals based on their biological make-up. Pavlovian and Marxist theory saw each individual as a *tabula rasa*, a clean slate upon which society made its distorting impress. Secondly, Freudian theory, in keeping with its Judaeo-Christian origins, preached a message of individualism, with the emphasis on self-mastery and autonomy. In the era of the collective, this was dangerous revisionist nonsense. Finally, there was undoubtedly an anti-Semitic context, which became more explicit and more serious with the execution of leading Jewish figures in the 1950s. Psychoanalysis was perceived as a largely Jewish invention and, as such, inherently anti-Communist.

Soviet psychiatry now started to move tangentially away from Western psychiatry. As American and British theorists paid increasing attention to self-actualisation and self-fulfilment, the concept of the collective started to dominate Soviet life. The psychiatrists' task came to be seen increasingly as ensuring the speedy reintegration of the patient back into the collective, to a position of productivity and responsibility. The treatment of illness was desirable—not to alleviate suffering *per se*, but because illness was economically inefficient to the collective. By the same token, behaviour which was recognisably different from that of the broad collective was now seen as evidence of "illness". Soviet psychiatrists became markedly less tolerant of the types of eccentric behaviour which their Western counterparts might regard as part of "life's rich tapestry".

In themselves, the differences between Soviet and Western psychiatry might not excite much curiosity. In the absence of any validating criteria for mental illness, it is impossible to say who is right and who is wrong. The Soviet model is neither better nor worse, just rather peculiar. These peculiarities would be unimportant if psychiatry existed independently of the State; but it doesn't. The psychiatrist in any political system is involved in the diagnosis and treatment of patients who have transgressed society's rules. This makes his position particularly vulnerable to political interference, and so there was a certain inevitability about subsequent events.

AFTER THE COLLAPSE of the Stalinist régime in 1956, the government sought new ways of silencing dissidence. Psychiatry lent itself to this task ideally, as it had a ready-made legislative framework for the compulsory detention of the insane. Furthermore, similar systems existed in every Western country, which rather forestalled any criticism from the West. By declaring a dissident to be insane, the authorities could at one and the same time invalidate his protest, ensure his isolation in a remote hospital, and yet present a caring face to the world by showing that their primary concern was with the well-being of this poor deranged creature. The louder the protests, the more severe must be his paranoia; and therefore all the longer must be the spell in hospital. One is reminded of "Country of the Blind", H. G. Wells's short story in which a young traveller chances upon a tribe whose members are all congenitally blind. This sighted man is examined by the tribe's doctors, who are much disturbed by his abnormal behaviour. They conclude that his problem is his eyes, and that all that is necessary to restore him to health is for his eyes to be removed.

In order to carry it off, Soviet psychiatrists needed to invent a new psychiatric terminology. It was readily apparent that the compulsory hospitalisation of healthy people would quickly stretch credibility, but if it could be shown that these people exhibited a range of behaviours associated with latent mental illness, officialdom's task would be much easier. Professor Andrei Snezhnevsky, director of the Institute of Psychiatry in Moscow, invented the diagnosis of "slowly

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progressive" or "sluggish" schizophrenia, which fitted the bill nicely. This convenient concept rests upon the idea that the patient will have only minimal symptoms at any given time, but that intensive examination will reveal a consistent pattern of psychopathology. The Serbsky Institute in Moscow became the leading centre for research into "sluggish schizophrenia", and its director, Professor Georgy Morozov, the chief apologist for the political abuse of psychiatry.

The patient might feel perfectly fine, his family might believe him to be quite healthy, but a psychiatrist could order his compulsory detention indefinitely on the basis of a diagnosis of "sluggish schizophrenia". This diagnosis has achieved notoriety throughout the world, and is by far the most common "admission ticket" to a psychiatric hospital for those who have incurred the displeasure of the State. The true number of people wrongfully detained in this way may never be known, but all available evidence suggests that it is vast. One of the few criteria for recovery from "sluggish schizophrenia" is recantation, the patient's admission that he was ill when he made the remarks or performed the acts that so displeased the psychiatrist (or, more likely, his political masters).

WORLDWIDE REVULSION at the horror stories emanating from the Soviet Union led to the condemnation of the Soviet Psychiatric Society at the meeting of the World Psychiatric Association (WPA) in 1977. Over the subsequent few years further instances of abuse were documented by Western observers, notably by Sidney Bloch and Peter Reddaway in their magisterial *Russia's Political Hospitals*. Fearing expulsion from the WPA at the 1983 meeting, Soviet psychiatrists decided to jump before they were pushed, and for the past seven years they have conducted their affairs in isolation from the rest of the world.

Lately there have been signs that the Soviets wish to rejoin the body of world psychiatry, and the WPA is now actively considering the options. What has changed? Not much, I fear. I will mention three observations which lead me to this conclusion.

Firstly, a number of articles have been published in Soviet newspapers and technical journals about the political abuse of psychiatry, but Anatoly Koryagin has pointed out[2] that these tend to blame individual psychiatrists who have accepted bribes from genuine criminals to declare them mentally ill and thus escape imprisonment. There has been little in the way of analysis of the doctrines of Snezhnevsky, and little has been said about the dangers of such a vague diagnosis as "sluggish schizophrenia". Specific instances of unwarranted compulsory hospitalisation have been cited, but always the impression is given that such cases are exceedingly rare. There has not been a single article in the Soviet psychiatric literature describing the systematic abuse, as opposed to the sporadic errors, of psychiatry. In other words, recantation—for so long a criterion of recovery in the eyes of Soviet psychiatrists—has yet to take place.

Secondly, the Soviet psychiatric Establishment continues to publish papers attempting to justify the concept of sluggish schizophrenia. The chief vehicle for this special pleading has long been the *Korsakov Journal of Neuropathology and Psychiatry*, the leading journal for Soviet neurologists and psychiatrists. A good example of this work has recently been translated and published in the *British Journal of Psychiatry*,[3] with detailed annotation by three North American doctors. This paper is an astonishing piece of equivocal reasoning, replete with *post-hoc* validation, irrrelevant references to Western research, devious shifts in premise, and a reliance upon ideas from Western literature which have long been abandoned or refashioned in the West.

Thirdly, the chief apologist for the political abuse of psychiatry in the Soviet Union, Professor Georgy Morozov, remains in his position as director of the notorious Serbsky Institute in Moscow. Recently I had the chance to meet Morozov in his office at the Serbsky, and his conversation was as full of bluster and self-justification as ever. He declared that there was no such thing as abuse of psychiatry in the Soviet Union; there was simply "a difference in diagnostic practice" between the Soviet Union and Western psychiatry. When I asked him about patients who were kept under conditions of special security in the Serbsky Institute, he conceded that few if any had committed murder or violent crimes, but defended the need for strict security on the grounds that the patients were "socially dangerous". This marvellous phrase, redolent of the worst excesses of Stalinist justice, suggests to me that as long as Morozov and his cronies are in the ascendancy, Soviet psychiatry must be regarded as little more than an instrument of State repression.

Of course, it is not all bad news. There are many psychiatrists in the Soviet Union who have struggled valiantly to continue to provide a caring service to their patients and to the community as a whole. My guess is that the further away from Moscow one travels, the greater the proportion of psychiatrists who fall into this category. The Bekhterev Institute in Leningrad was for many years a solitary outpost of humanism and civilised behaviour, until it too fell under the hegemony of Snezhnevsky *et al.* Now the Bekhterev is once again leading the way back to the practice of psychiatry as one of life's gentler arts, and not as a cynical exercise in political expedience. In fact, of the three great names in Russian psychiatry at the end of the 19th century, only that of Bekhterev remains unsullied by the events of the 20th. Korsakov's name has been tarnished by association with the journal of that name, which is to all intents and purposes the organ of propaganda for the Snezhnevsky school. Similarly, for most psychiatrists the name Serbsky will forever conjure up visions of the infamous practices of the Institute.

The paradox of Soviet psychiatry is this: Marxist-Leninism predicts that man's behaviour is a consequence of the social and economic conditions prevailing in society, but in a Communist state (which is the perfect society) it is inconceivable

[2] Anatoly Koryagin, "The Involvement of Soviet Psychiatry in the Persecution of Dissenters", *British Journal of Psychiatry*, March 1989.

[3] A. B. Smulevitch, "Slowly Progressive Schizophrenia—Myth or Clinical Reality", *British Journal of Psychiatry*, August 1989.

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that mental illness can be caused by social factors. Therefore mental illness in the Soviet Union is caused by subtle biological forces. This line of reasoning has led psychiatrists to seek evidence of physical changes in the brains of patients who have even very minor symptoms. Sometimes, the type of research they carry out appears frankly ridiculous.

A Professsor at the Bekhterev assured me, with nary a smile to indicate that she might be pulling my leg, that she performed EEG tests (measuring the brain's electrical activity) on patients before and after psychotherapy, and she claimed to have found differences caused by the treatment. To Western researchers, this level of naivety belongs in the realm of cheap science-fiction comics.

A recurring theme in this type of study is the search for differences between the two cerebral hemispheres. In a recent compendium of papers that I glanced at, research into hemispheric differences constituted no less than 50% of the total number of papers. Why have they become so engrossed with this idea? Perhaps a psychoanalyst would tell them that it represents an unconscious desire for the world to remain effectively split in two, non-threatening and safe and familiar. But perhaps he wouldn't.

The usurer hangs the cozener. In terms of wealth, power, prestige and influence, Morozov and his henchmen have undoubtedly profited from their practices. They have committed to penal institutions people whose crimes pale into insignificance beside their own venality. They have forcibly incarcerated those who dissent, "treated" those who are not ill, and broken the ancient trust between healer and sufferer. And they have been amply rewarded by the State for doing so. It is inconceivable to me that the World Psychiatric Association could welcome back the Soviet Union with open arms while these characters remain in their present positions. I am sure that there are other, more talented and more honest individuals who could represent a new face of Soviet psychiatry. But as I look at the slide-show, and though I hear the Professor's soothing words, I just cannot believe that that hemisphere has really been switched on.

AUTHORS

Peter Gilmour, who lives in Glasgow, teaches literature and philosophy with the Open University and at the University of Strathclyde. His stories have appeared in *Stand*, *Literary Review*, *Argo*, and *London Magazine*.

Adrian Smith is Senior Lecturer in History at La Sainte Union College of Higher Education in Southampton. He is currently writing a book on Michael Heseltine and management reorganisation in the Ministry of Defence. His previous contribution to ENCOUNTER was "Low and Lord Beaverbrook" (December 1985).

György Petri, who was born in Budapest in 1943, belongs to the generation of Hungarian poets who grew up after the 1956 Uprising. His first two books, *Explanations for M* (1971) and *Circumscribed Fall* (1974), were brought out by a state publishing house. But in the early 1980s he turned his back on official success: *Eternal Monday* (1982) and *What they Think* (1985) were both published in *samizdat*, and reflect a growing feeling of dissidence. Many of Petri's poems published in the 1980s are savage attacks on the political system of the Warsaw Pact as it then was. His Selected Poems, *Night Song of the Personal Shadow*, translated by Clive Wilmer and George Gömöri, is published this autumn by Bloodaxe Books.

Edward Pearce, formerly the political columnist and theatre critic of ENCOUNTER, now writes a column for *The Sunday Times*. His books include *Looking Down on Mrs Thatcher* (1987), in which several of his ENCOUNTER articles appear and *The Shooting Gallery* (1989), both published by Hamish Hamilton.

Jean-François Revel, the French philosopher and critic, writes a regular column for *Le Point* in Paris. His most recently translated work, *How Democracies Perish*, was published in 1985 by Weidenfeld (London) and Doubleday (New York).

Harold James, formerly a Fellow of Peterhouse, Cambridge, now teaches history at Princeton University. He is the author of *The Reichsbank and Public Finance in Germany* (1985), *The German Slump* (1986), and, most recently, *A German Identity 1770-1990* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1990).

Eric Sams writes on music—his books include *The Songs of Hugo Wolf* and *The Songs of Robert Schumann* (2nd rev. eds., Eulenburg, 1983, 1975)—and on historical cipher and shorthand, as well as on Shakespeare. *Shakespeare's Lost Play: Edmund Ironside* was published in 1986; *Edward III* is in preparation. His previous articles in ENCOUNTER include "Shakespeare, or Bottom?" (January 1989) and "A Plague o' Both Your Houses" (April 1989).

Saros Cowasjee, born in India in 1931, took his MA and BA in Agra, and his PhD at the University of Leeds; he has since 1971 been Professor of English at the University of Regina in Saskatchewan. The author of works of literary criticism on Sean O'Casey and Mulk Raj Anand, he has also published novels and volumes of short stories, and is the editor of numerous anthologies, including *Modern Indian Short Stories*, *Stories from the Raj*, *When the British Left*, and *The Raj and After*. His article is based on his introduction to *Women Writers of the Raj: Short Fiction from Kipling to Independence*, published in August by Grafton Books.

Keith Botsford teaches at the University of Boston. He is editor of *Bostonia* and American columnist for *The Independent* (London).

Antony Flew is Emeritus Professor of Philosophy at the University of Reading, and Distinguished Visiting Research Fellow at Bowling Green University, Ohio. His books include *God and Philosophy* (1966), *An Introduction to Western Philosophy* (1971, n.e. 1989), *Thinking About Social Thinking* (1985), and *Hume, Philosopher of Moral Science* (1986).

T. D. Rogers is a psychiatrist who has recently completed a postgraduate degree in psychophysiology at Edinburgh University. His previous article in ENCOUNTER, about Sir Charles Sherrington, was "A Loose Wheel Spinning" (September-October 1989).

Anna Adams's collections of poetry include *Dear Vincent* (Littlewood Press, 1986), *Trees in Sheep Country* (Peterloo Poets, 1987), and *Angels of Soho*, with pictures by Norman Adams (Royal Academy, 1988). Her third collection of poetry from Peterloo Poets, *Nobodies*, was published in May.

Malcolm Rutherford is Assistant Editor of the *Financial Times*.

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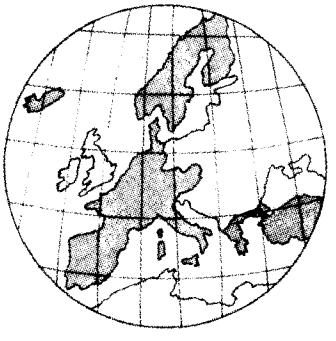
AUTHORS & CRITICS

Reading the Future

By William Pfaff



I AM GRATEFUL for Anthony Hartley's generous and temperate comments on my political writings ("Barbarian Sentiments & Civilised Advice", ENCOUNTER, April 1990). Temperance is not in long supply in most American discussions of these matters. Let me say a word on two points on which my crystal ball was certainly clouded.

The first is German unity. I said in 1989, in *Barbarian Sentiments* (the book Mr Hartley chiefly discusses), that the division of Germany is, geopolitically speaking, what the European part of World War II proved to have been all about. I claimed that Germany's division was "almost certainly" irreversible. Today, of course, it is clear that it "almost certainly" will be reversed.

The force of German nationalism has counted in this outcome, as Mr Hartley argues, but the enabling factor has been the Soviet Union's abandonment of its East German satellite régime and Moscow's apparent (we have yet to see the end of this affair, of course) abdication of its strategic position in Central Europe. This made it impossible for the Western allies to do other than acquiesce in the German unification they had rashly endorsed in the 1950s, when they thought they were in no danger of being taken up on it, and considered it a useful club against the Soviets.

To oppose Germany's unification in today's circumstances would simply alienate German opinion and wreck that reconciliation of the West European powers which has been the chief accomplishment of the post-War period. Whether Germany's partition could have been maintained in other circumstances is now speculation. Certainly the East Germans have made it clear that they want unification—but why? German nationalism? Or simply to end an intolerable situation as expeditiously as possible, to rejoin West European civilisation, and claim a share in Western prosperity?

WILLIAM PFAFF *is a syndicated columnist for the "International Herald Tribune" and a contributor to "The New Yorker". His most recent book is "Barbarian Sentiments: How the American Century Ends" (Hill & Wang, 1989).*

Everyone knows that Mrs Thatcher is not the only one in the West (including West Germany) to have misgivings about what is happening. I think the world a more comfortable place with two Germanies, presuming they are democratically-governed, autonomous Germanies (three, if we count Austria), because the record of a united Germany is such an unhappy one. It was not a success, even for the Germans. But then I am more comfortable with a Canada as well as a United States in North America, and even think it might have been better had the Confederacy succeeded in leaving the Union.

I do not say this about Germany because I think present or future generations should "eternally be held as scapegoats for what happened a half-century ago". The question is not one of guilt, but of responsibility for the history of one's nation. I am not guilty of slavery, nor am I responsible for the institutions of Jim Crow which oppressed black Americans during the century following Emancipation (although slavery existed during my great-grandfather's lifetime and "Jim Crow" during mine).

I am none the less responsible for that history, in that these things were done by my forebears: and I am also responsible for the consequences, which gravely affect American society today. I cannot turn away from the inner city today, saying "I didn't do it".

In the same way, Germans are responsible for dealing with the consequences of what happened between 1933 and 1945. They must deal with the factors in German political culture—that *vertige Allemand*—which made their country vulnerable to extreme and racialist nationalism in the past, and allowed so many Germans to collaborate in what manifestly were crimes against the established moral code of Germany and of that Christian Europe of which Germany had always been a crucial part.

ANTHONY HARTLEY NOTES my strictures on the moralism and ideological content of American policy in recent years, remarking that Eastern Europe's liberation in 1989 seems a response to just those qualities. What has happened is certainly "a victory for the forces of righteousness headed by the United States", but I would argue that it is mainly, crucially, a victory for nationalism. Certainly these people wanted democracy, but they mainly wanted to be free peoples, free nations—which is not quite the same thing. The Romanians wanted desperately to be free but have distinctly unclear ideas about democracy, not to speak of the free market. The events of 1989 were not so much a "victory" in the American-Soviet struggle as a series of liberating upheavals among peoples reclaiming national autonomy after years of stultifying oppression and impoverishment dictated from abroad.

In any case, "*We*" didn't free Eastern Europe. Americans paid for Radio Free Europe, and stood firm in NATO; and *that helped. But American policy, for the greater part of the* post-War period, acquiesced in Soviet control of Eastern Europe, in the interests of stability. "Rollback" came to an end under Dwight Eisenhower and John Foster Dulles, who had invented the slogan but didn't mean it. They witnessed the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, and implicitly informed

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the East Europeans that they shouldn't try that again. When the Czechoslovaks rebelled peacefully in 1968, Lyndon Johnson conveyed to Eastern Europe the message that even that was going too far. The Czechoslovaks had jeopardised American hopes for Soviet cooperation in stopping the Viet Nam war. Dr Kissinger's State Department famously set itself to "manage the emergence of the Soviet Union as a superpower" and to contribute to an East European evolution that would produce an "organic"—meaning more stable—relationship between the Soviet Union and its East European satellites.

THROUGHOUT THE PERIOD I had myself argued that Soviet control of the region would eventually have to end because national feeling could not indefinitely be suppressed. The Soviet Union had failed to impose itself culturally, which is what successful empires do. It ruled merely by military force and would sooner or later be compelled to leave. The obligation of the West was to promote a peaceful and constructive Soviet withdrawal and avoid a catastrophic one.

Thus, from the 1950s on, I was among those writing about "disengagement", about security guarantees to the Soviet Union in exchange for negotiated politico-military withdrawals, about Eastern Europe's "Finlandisation", and so on. These were not themes which found much sympathy, or even interest, in American government circles or the Western policy community. As late as 1984, a proposal of mine to the Twentieth Century Fund for a study of how to manage the consequences of a break-up of the Soviet Empire (since, I said, the Soviet system was "declining in political coherence and dynamism") was turned down as "excessively speculative" and of "limit[ed] practical value."

I was wrong in believing that the Soviets would have to be helped to go, and would never go easily. I supposed that even reasonable men in the Kremlin would be caused to withdraw only by a combination of stress and breakdown inside their system and initiatives from the outside that made withdrawal an acceptable choice. In fact, internal crisis alone did it—that, and what I think we must also recognise as a seizure of conscience. Today's Soviet leaders and élite have consciously repudiated the immorality of the past and have accepted responsibility for rectifying the crimes committed in the name of the Soviet people. This is the most impressive thing of all in what has happened.

I quite agree with Anthony Hartley that events now demand a continued American presence in Europe, contributing to its stability; and I feel reasonably confident that this will come about, despite the drift towards unilateralism in American policy and the old American inclination towards isolationism. The latter is fuelled today by economic as well as political resentments directed against allies increasingly perceived as "importunate, implicated in our own disappointments, increasingly our rivals"—as I put it in *Barbarian Sentiments*.

I suggested there that a period of isolation might be good for my country, allowing it to recover its sense of what the American nation really is about and to address a traumatically neglected domestic order. Saving the post-War world—an indispensable and glamorous task—has not proven particularly good for the American nation itself. Evidence of that is provided in the decline in quality of political discourse and practice in the United States today, in the country's social and racial tensions, and in its industrial and economic shortcomings.

Attention to matters at home is in order.

Happy Valley Races, Hong Kong

Four flights up, eight sweating tailors,
Brothers, cousins, all lean toward the two fans,
Squint under bare bulbs, and walk their treadles
Through the night. Each racing night they pool
Their bets for a double quinella
On the fourth and fifth races, not
On the favourites, always at best odds.
One hopes to buy the business from the boss,
One, never to sew again. Perhaps twice
In a year with the fourth race already theirs
No treadle moves, no cloth is cut,
No chalk marks a bolt, three-piece suits
Wait for basting while shreds and threads of

Superfine Worsted, Kid Mohair Wool, Vicuna Cashmere,
Trevira Linen, Tropical Wool, Wool Mink, Royal Silk,
Terylene Wool, Silk Suede, Silk and Wool, Gabardine,
Dormeuil, All Wool, Cashmere, Cotton, and Corduroy,

Blown by the nodding fan, scud along the floor.

Michael Holstein

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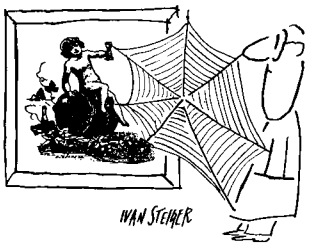
ART

Making It New

By Anna Adams



IF YOU WISH to go to the Tate Gallery in order to cheer for Britain, or even England, it is now much easier to do so, for Stanley Spencer's *Cookham Resurrection* is hanging on the end wall of Room 15, the first gallery on the left—where it can be seen, through three rooms, from the far end of Room 17 (full of Dada and Surrealism) instead of being shuffled out of sight, half-way down a staircase, as it was until very recently.

It is, of course, a good idea to look at this painting closely, as well as from far off, for it is much more than a pattern. In it the long-dead rise through turf that lifts flowery lids to let them escape into a crowded churchyard. A girl in a daisy-patterned dress comes running out of a cleft in the daisied grass, and there are several figures which resemble Stanley Spencer. The artist's mother is enthroned in a central position, under a church porch roofed with roses. Behind her stands the father, while in her lace-clad lap lies a clutch of babies. Are they brothers and sisters who died in infancy?

One feels that most of the people who are suddenly so delighted to find themselves alive again are friends and relations of the artist, so perhaps this picture invites an accusation of provincialism, or, what is supposed to be even worse, parochialism. But the poet Patrick Kavanagh has long since convinced me that parochialism—the celebration of what David Jones called "the Actually Known and Loved"—is good, and the source of true art; while provincialism, which continually looks over its shoulder at the capital city and imitates whatever they are doing there, and thinks it is being "International" thereby, is false and tedious.

Perhaps this rehang is a kind of resurrection of the good kind of parochialism (the late Peter Fuller's "informed insularity"), whereby artists find inspiration in the places where they live, just as Bonnard found most of what he needed in his own home—as did Monet, in old age, in his garden; while Cézanne made Mont St. Victoire into a holy mountain, Morandi achieved monumentality by continually ringing the changes on the same collection of old bottles and vases, and Graham Sutherland put remotest Pembrokeshire on to the map of art.

Stanley Spencer was not unaware of other art, of course. He was quite clearly influenced by Gauguin in his early *Apple Gatherers*, but his subject matter was his own experience. He had his own world, and when Christ carries his Cross, it is through the streets of Cookham that he carries it; just as it is Brussels, and not Jerusalem, that is entered in James Ensor's great painting of *Christ Entering the Streets of Brussels*, (which is not, alas, in the Tate). It was not parochialism but something else that undermined Stanley Spencer.

In the *Cookham Resurrection* several of the figures appear to be dressed in lace curtains, and much delight has gone into the painting of these; but there isn't the obsession with clothes, and their knitted or tweedy textures, which overwhelms the later and fustian *Port Glasgow Resurrection*, also hung in this room of mystical paintings. The splendid early *Self Portrait* and the anxious and fiddly late one encapsulate the story of a genius who was once young and wise, and painted the early masterpieces, but who, two World Wars and two uncomfortable marriages later, had become an amiable, self-imitating clothes-fetishist, which probably contributed to the long eclipse of his reputation.

The Tate has now given him pride of place, and he can be seen properly at last, though we aren't really intended to see him first. Nicholas Serota's rearrangement begins in the central Sculpture Gallery, where we are greeted by a delegation of 19th-century nudes by Rodin, Maillol, Renoir, Lord Leighton, and Meštrović. This is as it should be, for "The naked human body is the beginning and the end of everything", said Rodin. Then we skirt round Richard Long's selection of Welsh slate, which reminds me of the quarries of Blaenau Ffestiniog; but one cannot bring a whole landscape indoors, just as one cannot bring in the forest but only a potted plant. Around Long's platter of stones stand Matisse's four human backs, which progress from near-realism to simplified formality, in high relief; but these do not really prepare us for the abandonment of the figure which is to come, and beyond which is a strait gate on the left whereby we enter "the History of British Painting".

AS IN ANY SORT of history, there is a great deal of prose to get through. Many fairly dull people had their straitlaced, overdressed, boozy, bellicose, self-important and warty portraits painted, but sometimes the result was a lovely painting. Van Dyck's overweight girl in blue silk is one such, and the Lely close to it is another, but I find myself carried away by an earlier painter called Robert Peake.

Peake painted the portraits of two sisters: Lady Elizabeth Pope and Lady Anne Pope. The Lady Elizabeth, wearing a dark, pearl-embroidered undress, has long loose hair and an all-but-naked bosom. The Lady Anne (who is the prettier), has the same long, loose, frizzy hair, but she appears more buttoned-up and virtuous. Both are ravishing and mysterious, painted in lovely subtle colour, and seem strangely modern in their Jacobean way. One could spend hours among portraits, wondering about the people. Some of them look so young. Can any of them have an inkling that they have been dead for more than 300 years?

But here are the animals and the pictures of sporting life that philistine Englishmen are so keen on, and among them is George Stubbs. While I was looking at his balletic

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Reapers, with its seven figures, one horse, and a dog, all ranged rhythmically along the foreground, a lecturer came along with a group of Japanese girls imbibing British culture.

"Stubbs, of course", he said, "is famous for his *Anatomy of the Horse*. He flayed and anatomised a dead horse in his studio, and produced his wonderful *Horse Atlas*. It took him months: you can imagine the smell." And he swept his little flock away without having paid any actual attention to Stubbs's beautiful painting of peasants in the summer fields, gathering in an 18th-century harvest.

The figures are neat as dancers, dressed with much propriety in subtle pinks, browns, and greys. The women wear white kerchiefs and aprons, and quite elaborate black-shadow-casting hats. The squire, on horseback, surveys the toilers and seems to be giving the prettiest young woman the eye. A rustic love story could begin here, and end with a shotgun wedding in the small grey church beyond the trees. In the lower right-hand corner are two beautiful sheaves of wheat, leaning together, for those were the days of stooking, an art which continued in Britain, unchanged, until the late 1940s when the combine-harvester began to make havoc of the old ways.

In the same corner of a different picture, the small *Cornfield at Ewell* by William Holman Hunt, there are also two sheaves, leaning together in the same way over 100 years later—for we are now in another room, full of 19th-century Academicians and Pre-Raphaelites. So Holman Hunt's harvest picture is much brighter—yellow and blue—than the Stubbs, but the theme remains the same, though there is only one reaper, bending to his work in the middle distance.

It would be possible to trace such recurrent themes as haytime and harvest through the history of painting. Constable, too, celebrated those unchanging aspects of life which have recently changed so much. He gets almost an entire room to himself, and with the giant Turner absent in the Clore Galleries, he is able to stand head-and-shoulders above most other landscape artists of his time, though there are lovely Cotmans and early Linnells about.

John Constable could be termed a "Landscape Expressionist", for in his splatterdash paintings of trees and skies he tells us as much about the weather in his mind as he does about external showers and rainbows. *Hadleigh Castle*, for instance, with its turbulent sky and its towers in ruin, was painted at the time of his wife's death, from tuberculosis, after twelve years of marriage. In spite of the anguish evident in this picture, we are cheering for England quite vociferously (if silently) at this point, as we are at Constable's festive *Opening of the new Waterloo Bridge*. This rich and exuberant painting does not show us the London we know, but the one Wordsworth wrote about from Westminster Bridge, when Waterloo Bridge was still unbuilt and the Dome of St Paul's was the highest thing for miles.

THERE ARE various ways of enjoying pictures. Constructivists, in Room 16, treat us to pure aesthetics; whereas Social Realists rouse our moral fervour, often in pictures wherein *oscuro* prevails over *chiaro*, for "Social Realism" is a code phrase for those unfairly distributed unavoidables: poverty, sickness and death. Conceptualist sculptors make us think, often, of better ways of doing a similar thing, and 19th-century Academicians and Pre-Raphaelites tend to tell us stories. If we allowed them all to tell us their tales, we would be loitering in their skylit, barrel-vaulted gallery all day, and longer. There would always be one more Ancient Mariner of a picture to hold us back from the wedding-feast of French hedonism in Rooms 11, 12, and 13.

I find it difficult to remember what used to hang in these various galleries in the recent past, and I have never before appreciated the shapes of the rooms. The great variation in size has been made good use of. William Blake is able to have a room of his own, as is fitting; for he did what he did better than anyone else, and though he had (and still has) disciples, he remains unique.

Next door to Blake, in a room of similar size, hangs an assortment of Pandemoniacs and Apocalyptics under the heading of "The Romantic Imagination". It is here that the British appear at their oddest, and even dottiest, suffering what is really a failure of imagination. One does not cheer for Richard Dadd, but retires to a darkened room with a migraine. John Martin has painted a red-hot Hell in vermilion and pitch, which makes us feel no better; and Fuseli's Lady Macbeth has studied at the Royal Academy of Over-acting. All these pictures would appear to have come from the Land of Over-do, so Rural Naturalism, round the next corner, comes as a great relief.

Then, quite suddenly, we find ourselves cheering wildly for the French in the room where the French and British Impressionists face one another from opposite walls, as though lined up for battle. But English painting does not meet its Waterloo here, thanks to the American Whistler and the underrated Wilson Steer. Painting is not a battlefield, in any case, but a cooperation of delight.

THE TATE was originally founded in 1897 to house a national collection of British Art, but by 1915 it had been decided that it should show modern foreign works also. "This", as Peter Fuller said in the last editorial he wrote for *Modern Painters*:

> "Led to an institutionalised schizophrenia which has bedevilled the gallery down to the present day, for the conflicting demands of the Tate's two collections beg the great aesthetic and historic question, 'What is the relation between the best of British art and Modernism?'"

The relation of the best of British art to Modernism is probably the same as the relation between the best of Italian art (Morandi, for instance) and Modernism; or the best of French art (Matisse, for instance) and Modernism. Modernism is what turns into Old-Fashionedism in a couple of decades, while the best of British or French or Italian art is what survives the changes in style.

A lucky artist has, perhaps, a 50-year working life, and during this time he may enjoy fame, or suffer eclipse, and experience adulation or mockery. He may improve (as Turner did) or degenerate (as Palmer did), but something in his work will remain constant. Paul Nash painted Paul

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Nashes all his life, and Lucien Freud has painted Lucien Freuds all his life. Jacob Epstein made Epsteins all his life, but where are they at the moment? Only his marble pigeons are to be seen. Let us hope he will reappear eventually.

It is certain that whatever contrary winds were blowing during the course of Epstein's working life, he would never have spent weeks and months picking a young tree out of a great beam of wood, as one of the modernist sculptors has done here—because Epstein was concerned with making apparent, not the form inside the stone, but the expressive form within his own mind. The slender young tree which Giuseppe Penone has found inside the massive corpse of a full-grown American larch is beautiful because trees are beautiful. It is also food for thought. The sculptor did a great deal of handwork in the service of a poetic idea. Inside every grown man is a vulnerable child: inside every grandmother is a lissom girl: inside every old tree is a sapling. The artist could be said to have psychoanalysed the tree. Yet such works are not expressive created forms but merely dissections of nature: dried tree-foetuses: bits of the outside world brought indoors, like Richard Long's rockery.

Now we have crossed over the central sculpture gallery to the rooms where all is modern and much is foreign. Paul Nash is in a room by himself, and Giacometti almost has a room to himself, between Neo-Romanticism and Abstract Expressionism. Among the Neo-Romantics, several Sutherlands hang facing Minton, Colquhoun and Craxton. We may cheer for Britain again here, if we like, but it is difficult to be chauvinistic so close to the Tate's Picassos. We should cheer for what moves us and yawn for what bores us, and I suffer a diminuendo of cheering until I fall totally silent in the Minimalists' room. "Where are the German Expressionists?" I wonder, "and where is Munch?"

Perhaps they will be shown later, as may Ethel Walker's *Nausicaa*, which I do not remember having seen for years. We understand that everything cannot be seen at once, and things are going to change and rotate, fairly continuously. On the whole we all seem to be well pleased. There was a chorus of praise, seasoned with very little carping, from the critics when the rehang was first shown earlier this year. I find it quite wonderful that a coherent rearrangement of the same old pictures can make them all seem new.

After a Crisis

Thin ice on the butt surfaces:
In the night, the horse-chestnut hands
Separate from the tree and tap the roof
Crowding pale green and gold underfoot.
I fill a dozen sacks with them, in the cold sun.

At last, we are being realistic,
My little one, in your vermilion sweater,
Two long black ribbons swinging over your breasts:
We plan out the last years and our survival.

Last week I stood examining a painting,
Obsessionally, to calm myself,
Details of a ripe fig with pearly fibrils,
While a body of men summed me up,
Deciding on my future—
One of those anxious moments in the waiting-room
When you hear the faint creak of ropes.
So, in a better mood of contentment
I push the leaf harvest into sacks,
Hold you, grumbling, as the afternoon fades . . . .
"Do you dread the winter?" you ask.
To my surprise, I find I do not:
I relish the cool edge-burning autumn,
The closing in of the dark: I concentrate
On pruning and bringing to fruition,
Carting in little loads and tasting
The special sweetness of the late-picked apple,
The wild afterthoughts of October raspberries,
Dark softening medlars and the last courgettes.
I have no sense of waste and futility
As the river carries the broken leaves away.

David Holbrook

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THEATRE

Ibsen's Ambiguities

Of Pain & Pleasure

By Malcolm Rutherford

IBSEN'S *The Wild Duck* is the most unbearably painful, good play to watch that I know. The reason is not just the symbolism, with which it abounds; nor is it the relentless realism, in which it excels. It is the knowledge, which must be intuitive at first viewing, that the 14-year-old Hedvig is going to kill herself, that no one on stage realises it—not even Gregers Werle, who urges the killing of the wild duck—and that nobody is going to stop her. The play is a march to inevitability.

The symbolism, though pervasive, is not entirely clear-cut. On the face of it, the wild duck *is* Hedvig. The fowl has been shot, but not killed. It dives to the bottom of the deep, determined to die there, as apparently wild ducks do. But it is retrieved by an unusually resolute dog. It lives in the loft of Hedvig's family, along with many tamer beasts like rabbits. Hedvig identifies with it, regards it as hers—but there is no particular reason to believe that she does this because she thinks that she, like the duck, is trapped in unnatural surroundings. On the contrary, it could just be childish romanticism. At the start, she seems a remarkably, if naively, happy girl. You could argue that the young wild duck was happy, too, till it was winged. But that is chasing symbolism too far.

Besides, the symbolism applies just as much to Old Ekdal, Hedvig's grandfather. He was a hunter, who shot nine bears in his prime. He now shoots the rabbits in the loft. The presence of the wild duck helps him to believe that he is still going out into the forest. Other characters in the play, notably Gina—Hedvig's mother—think that having the wild duck in the loft may be slightly unusual, but its being there provides pleasurable relief rather than a sense of doom.

So perhaps it is worth returning to something that Ibsen said about the play when he wrote it. He noted that *The Wild Duck* would provide "plenty to squabble about, plenty to interpret". In other words, there is no simple solution to the symbolism. There is suggestion all over the place, but the symbolism is a bit of a tease.

A great deal else in the play is never clear. If you doubt that, set yourself the task of trying to give an accurate summary of the plot. It is much more difficult than providing a synopsis of, say, *Hamlet*. Essentially, it might go something like this. Mr Werle, a successful businessman in what appears to be the timber trade in small-town Norway, is not wholly faithful to his wife, especially when she becomes terminally ill. At some stage he takes to his bed the housekeeper, Gina, who has been nursing his wife. Gina may or may not have become pregnant by him—she says herself that she has never been quite sure. Anyway Mr Werle allows her to marry Hjalmar Ekdal around nine months before a child is born: the dates are never quite precise.

Hjalmar is the son of Old Ekdal, a man who was once a business accomplice of Mr Werle and who may or may not have led the firm into some shady, or at least incompetent deals. Either way, he has been disgraced. Mr Werle evidently feels sufficiently guilty about it to provide him with enough funds to keep him housed, clothed and fed, though in much reduced circumstances.

Although the financial situation is precarious, all goes reasonably well for about fourteen years. Gina and Hjalmar Ekdal are married and have their adoring daughter, Hedvig. Old Ekdal lives with them and creates his forest in the loft. Hjalmar is a competent, if not very successful and rather lazy photographer. However, Mr Werle has a son called Gregers, who was a boyhood friend of Hjalmar. Gregers never approved of his father, was shocked by his behaviour to his (Gregers's) mother, and went off to work in some remote part of the country. The play opens when Gregers comes back, full of moral absolutes and determined to set records straight.

ALL THAT MUST sound pretty unpromising material. Moreover, very few records *are* set straight. It is revealed that Gina was trained in some of the techniques of photography, with Mr Werle's help, before she married Hjalmar, so that at least she could assist him to earn a living. It is revealed that Mr Werle is paying rather more money to Old Ekdal than Hjalmar had previously realised, and that Gina, who keeps the accounts, knew about this all along. Hedvig is said to be going blind, though there is no direct proof of this in the play: it may be only Hjalmar's imagination and his ability to make Hedvig believe it. Suspicion mounts when it emerges that Mr Werle, too, is losing his sight. That explains how he winged rather than killed the wild duck. Gregers goes for a long walk with Hjalmar and tells him about Gina's past. Gina admits that she had an affair with Mr Werle, but insists that she does not know who is the father of the child. Whereupon Hjalmar renounces Hedvig, insisting that she is not his own. Why he blames the possible illegitimacy on the daughter is never explained.

Gregers tells Hedvig that all can be expiated if she can persuade Old Ekdal to kill the wild duck. In the end she goes into the loft, unbeknown to anyone except the audience, and deliberately, after a period of mounting tension on stage, kills herself.

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Put like that, it sounds like the synopsis of an impossible opera performed in an alien language, redeemed by the occasional brilliance of the music or the grandeur of the death scene. Yet *The Wild Duck* works on stage. One reason for this lies in the ambiguities. These are apparent not only in the symbolism, which is general rather than specific, and they are not confined to the uncertainty about facts: for example, how much of a villain is Mr Werle? Ambiguities run throughout the play. This may be a small town in Scandinavia with a supposedly rigid set of moral or behavioural values, but it turns out to be surprisingly liberal. Mr Werle, when the play opens, is all but openly cohabiting with a new housekeeper, Mrs Sorby. She presides over his dinner for the local aldermen. The real relationship between the two must be perfectly obvious to them. The men accept her presciently modern fiat that smoking is no longer allowed in the drawing-room; then she plays blind-man's buff with them. No one seems to think that this is untoward. Only Mr Werle wonders if he is compromising her by not marrying her. He thinks that his son, Gregers, might object, though it turns out that even Gregers does not. The marriage takes place amid congratulations from, among others, previous lovers of Mr Werle and Mrs Sorby. It is a relatively permissive society.

THE TRUTH is that there are no absolute villains: certainly not Mr Werle, who can at times be generous as well as ruthless, penitent as well as punishing. Perhaps not his son Gregers either, who is almost entirely responsible for the death of Hedvig. It was he who put the idea of killing into her mind. Yet there is some evidence that he meant well. Gina and Hjalmar may come together again after the child's death. "We must help each other to bear it", Gina says at the end. "For now, at least, she belongs to both of us."

There may be a hero. This is Relling, the drunken doctor who along with Molvik, the even more drunken former student of theology, has rooms in the Ekdal house. Relling thinks that everyone needs illusions in the way that Old Ekdal needs the animals in the loft to keep him sane and to remind him of his more glorious past. Relling is totally contemptuous of Gregers for trying to reshape a marriage by revealing that Hedvig may not be Hjalmar's daughter. But Relling, too, is flawed—down-and-out as a professional doctor and, we learn, the one-time lover of Mrs Sorby. He is merely the character who sees matters most objectively, but is unable to affect the course of events.

The other factor in the play is the unyielding realism. They eat herring on stage and, in the case of Molvik, retreat to vomit when they see a skinned rabbit, brought on by Old Ekdal from his shooting expedition in the loft. The household talk is, as much as anything, about the price of butter. Nearly half the stage is taken up by the loft to show how much illusion and reality intrude upon each other.

When *The Wild Duck* was first performed, it was a huge success. It went round the theatrical capitals of the world: Paris, Berlin and Moscow. Chekhov loved it. Shaw thought that it was one of the best plays he had ever seen, probing deeply into the secrets of personal life. Ibsen himself described it as a tragi-comedy, which it is, for even in the run-up to Hedvig's suicide in the loft the audience is intermittently, if nervously, laughing at the action on stage, such as Hjalmar losing his hat and not knowing if he can leave the house. It is a misleading comment on Sir Peter Hall's production at the Phoenix to say, as many have done, that he has introduced a note of comedy. It was always there. No other final act is so full of dramatic irony.

Nevertheless, the combination of symbolism, realism and ambiguity remains almost unbearably painful. It becomes even more so if the comedy is allowed to emerge. The Hall production is a masterpiece of a masterpiece. If one had to pick out a single performance, it would be Nichola McAuliffe, who almost transforms the character of Gina into a heroine, thus undermining the ambiguity of everyone's role. And if you want to see what a new translation can do to get rid of old clichés, note this change from Relling's "Surely you can see that Hedvig is dead", in the standard English text, to "Hedvig is no longer alive". It means the same, but sounds quite different. *The Wild Duck* is scarcely performed at this level more than once a decade. That is enough. Anyone who sees it will remember it. As a play, it is indelible.

Devon

If you happen to touch
The third string of a girl's name
It's music, not speech
Trickles down the combe
Making fruitful the rich
Glebes of the home farm
To raise among sleek vetch
Lips' strawberry, skin's cream.

Robert Conquest

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LETTERS

"Franglaiseries"

MY LATE PARENTS are to blame: plucking a boy of five from Melbourne, Victoria, and taking him to Montpellier, Herault, to be schooled. By the time I was twelve, I sounded French when attempting English. So *M* (Richard Mayne's "Column", ENCOUNTER, March 1990) had me rolling in the aisles. But "*Roulant dans les couloirs*" doesn't sound quite right. How about "*J'ai failli crever de rire*"? Oh dear! "Almost bust my sides".

But then, how can one win, whatever the linguistic theme or version? When Franco told the caretaker Prime Minister of the Spanish Republic that the situation was getting out of hand, and that he had better do something about it, Manuel Portela, who was old, indecisive and unambitious, said he would "*consultar con la almohada*". What, "consult with the pillow"? How about "sleep on it"? (It was too late anyway: the Civil War wasn't far off.)

It's just as bad in German. I had to wait 30 years or so before actually getting a chance, in real life talk, to use a phrase memorised from my Hugo: "*Es scheint mir dass dieser Wein etwas zu Wünschen übrig lässt.*" (Good Lord! "It seems to me that this wine something to the wish left over leaves.") No, that *can't* be right, can it? Not so bad in French, though: "*Il me semble que ce vin laisse quelque chose à désirer.*" Plain English: ". . . isn't quite up to the mark"?

BRIAN CROZIER

London

Prophetic?

DANIEL JOHNSON ("Ten Provisional Theses", April 1990) is bound to get things wrong if he relies on a drunken Scottish Communist, a foolish French writer and "most of us", whoever they may be. It is absurd to suggest, as he does, that old and young in the West had come to terms with the division of Europe.

It had been conventional wisdom since 1948 that the Communist régimes of Eastern Europe survived only because they were backed by Soviet force, and that if Soviet support were removed they would crumble, which is exactly what happened.

The fact that the Soviet Empire was a failure was obvious from 1968, when the Czechoslovak reforms were crushed. The fact that it was heading into deepening crises was clear from the end of the 1970s or earlier. I remember William Rees-Mogg, then Editor of *The Times*, musing in the early '70s that capitalism could turn out to be the great revolutionary force of the future. I myself wrote in *The Times* on 18 December 1980 that the Soviet Union would one day decide that Eastern Europe was more of a liability than an asset.

Admittedly that seemed rather speculative at the time, but I did not feel particularly alone or original when I wrote in 1983 that "Eastern Europe is heading into a period of stress . . . which existing institutions are unable to handle . . . . The last few years have revealed more clearly than ever that the division of Europe has not established itself in East or West as the just and permanent answer to the continent's ancient problems . . . . Relations between the two German states are acquiring a momentum which raises long-term questions for both pacts. In fact, the entire European security system seems to be slowly losing rather than gaining legitimacy" (*Washington Quarterly*, Spring 1984).

No one with any grasp of reality regarded the status quo as either desirable or immutable. Most Western policy debates circled around the problem of how to loosen Moscow's grip, or how to help the East Europeans for as long as Moscow refused to release them. Everything that happened in 1989 was predicted, expected, and widely desired—except, perhaps, for the reunification of Germany. The only surprise was that it all happened so quickly.

RICHARD DAVY

Oxford

Are Aliens "Just Like Us"?

M's Column & "Racism"—By HERB GREER

M's "COLUMN" (ENCOUNTER, MAY), regretting a "pinch of chauvinism" which he sees coming our way, expresses a particularly fashionable moral imperative. This is essentially the old saw "Nothing human is alien to me." Certain social choices are listed by *M* as though they lay on a supermarket shelf to be taken up or discarded at will: "for tolerance, against dogmatism, for [or against] equality between the sexes; [ditto] mutual understanding; for rational discussion, not violence; for sceptical open-mindedness; for a sense of proportion and a sense of humour. . . ."

This is splendid as a homiletic shopping-list, but the implicit reference is to the individual, and begs the central question in such matters today. When cultural groups clash, these choices are not usually available in the heat of battle. Furthermore, they are all founded in a particular West European (and especially Anglo-Saxon) political culture, springing from certain imperatives of the 18th-century West European Enlightenment. These are not shared by other cultures.

The example of Islamic militancy has been highlighted not only by the politics of hostage-taking and the notorious Salman Rushdie case, but by Iraqi attempts to obtain nuclear and other unusual weapons technology. These cases, among others, have embarrassed apologists for the Islamic world, who disavow aggressive intentions and point to the Koran's injunctions to be tolerant. But they do not mention a pertinent corollary to these, which is that the commands are not issued (as they are in the present Western tradition) from a stance of relativistic humility. On the contrary, the Islamic admonition takes for granted the triumphant superiority of Islam to other creeds which ought—notionally—to be tolerated. Furthermore, Koranic tolerance is not unconditional and does not extend to dissent within the faith of Islam itself. This can, as we have seen in the Rushdie case, carry a sanction of death.

THESE CASES EXPOSE characteristic facets of a religion and culture which are not only fundamentally alien, but essentially hostile to Western traditions. Now that Christianity has largely ceased to be a religion and rotted into a fissiparous denomination, the differences stand out much more sharply. Because individuals from each world can and do cross frontiers and work in the culture of the other, many well-intentioned people have leapt to the conclusion that the two worlds—because both are populated by human beings—are really not that different ("We all worship one God", etc.). Now that there is a serious prospect of nuclear-armed despots in the Islamic world, this misunderstanding—most often taking the form of wilful blindness among those who shape public opinion—may well become a threat to our survival.

Many Americans, Britons (and, these days, West Europeans) cling stubbornly to their habit of seeing the Middle East as though it were an imperfect but improving branch of our own civilisation. They find it almost impossible to believe in the existence of people—not individuals, but whole populations and cultures—who simply do not reason as Westerners do in

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political matters, do not relate to power as they do, and share none of their standards and criteria for government. This parochial habit of mind creates a distorting lens for our view of political conflicts in the Middle East. It also leaves Western public opinion open to manipulation—by prejudiced media reporters, cowardly politicians, and by a number of extremely *louche* figures who seek outside support for their stirrings in the political cauldron of the Levant. Media and public applause for US government talks with Yasser Arafat was a recent and very successful example of such manipulation.

The Closed Circle (1989) by David Pryce-Jones is one of the few serious attempts to breach this wall of ignorance, to open the eyes of people who would much prefer to keep them shut tight, and provide a useful conceptual framework for understanding Islamic politics. (Cf. David K. Shipler in *The New York Times Book Review*, 2 December 1989, who loftily begs all the questions raised by Pryce-Jones. Other reviewers in the United States, and Britain, also preferring to keep their eyes closed, have sneered at and dismissed his book.) *The Closed Circle* reminds the reader that the Arab world does not have the experience which we take for granted of Renaissance humanism and the 18th-century Enlightenment; that Islam has always been identified, not with forgiveness, with faith, hope, and charity, with liberal politics, but with the blackest despotism. Pryce-Jones quotes the Islam scholar, Professor Bernard Lewis:

> "There are no parliaments or representative assemblies of any kind, no councils or communes, no chambers of nobility or estates, no municipalities in the history of Islam; nothing but sovereign power, to which the subject owed complete and unwavering obedience as a religious duty imposed by the Holy Law."

With notable clarity, Pryce-Jones sets out and supports a paradox which, he says (quite correctly), is almost incomprehensible to the Western mind: the fact that political instability and violence can be "all of a piece" with continuity. The emergence of rulers in the Muslim Middle East and the Maghreb has always occurred, and still does, in the context of a power-challenge dialectic, whose arguments are not those of principle and civic trust in our sense, but simply of intimidation, fear, naked force, and blood. The inheritors of this legacy form constituencies which attach not to a commonality as we would understand it but to a despot who has been able to eliminate all other challengers through any available means, none of which correspond to electioneering in the Western style. Opponents are either bought off, in what Pryce-Jones calls "the money-favour nexus"; or they disappear into torture chambers or ghastly prisons; or they are simply deterred through displays of ruthless cruelty and main force.

The leader's constituency is a grouping based on tribe, family, and co-conspirators in the challenge for and holding of power, which in this world has nothing to do with electoral consent or the People's Will. It is nothing more abstruse than the ability to compel obedience, with no moral restrictions at all on the means employed for that purpose. This applies to every level of society, from the meanest follower to the leader himself. It is acceptable because it is seen, not as a threat to the freedom of the citizen as we see it—a concept which has no meaning among the common people of this culture—but as a guarantee of stability and security. It means that "the people" (or the popular mass, since the Western concept of a sovereign people is also meaningless here) gravitate toward the challenger who, by whatever means, looks like winning the violent struggle for power. A period of relative stability ensues, until the next power-challenger arises, and

> ". . . finds honour-justification in whatever will promote his career, and shame-justification for not compromising in anything that might lessen his advantages over other people . . . any power-holder orders torture or massacre, or declares war without reference to his subjects, and without a qualm. Far from being some kind of bloodstained beast, he is only a supreme careerist, and would feel himself shamed or lacking in manly and warriorlike qualities if he were to treat his challengers on the merits of their case. Leniency or the admission that he might have been wrong . . . would prove dishonourable and thus advance someone else's career."

THE CONCEPTS OF SHAME and honour function purely in terms of strength and weakness. The public arena of this world is the state of nature outlined by Hobbes in *Leviathan*, with man a wolf to man. In such a context, truth and falsehood cease to be lenses for seeing the world as it is, but are reduced to "a method of safeguarding honour and status" for oneself and destroying those of one's opponents. It follows naturally that lying is not only permissible but an indispensable ingredient of political life. The careers of Middle Eastern dictators, seen against such a background, are no longer isolated examples of violent usurpation by strong men, but part of a normal pattern of rule which has existed in the Middle East and the Maghreb for centuries.

With surgical efficiency *The Closed Circle* explores the historical roots and flourishing survival of Western blindness to Arab political traditions. The rather nasty blend of condescension and obsequiousness that we have come to call "radical chic" is not exactly new. Pryce-Jones describes it among the Fabians during the 1920s:

> ". . . [by] lawyers and lecturers and publicists . . . Arabs studying and travelling Europe . . . were enlisted into . . . psychological and social vanities and dissatisfactions . . . they did not treat Arabs as individuals from a vibrant and problematical background, but as representatives, 'anti-imperialist' spokesmen, raw material for a cause."

We see this pattern in today's apologists for the PLO, who are pleased to ignore Arab-language statements of intention to destroy Israel, preferring to focus on English-language propaganda from figureheads like Yasser Arafat, as evidence of "moderation".

The Closed Circle, despite its formidable historical argument and background (including a hair-raising chapter

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on Nazi influence in the Arab world), has been condemned for pointing out these rather obvious facts, and countered with pathetically anecdotal "evidence" of Islamic "liberals" and "moderates" who are supposed to be moving their world in a "Western" direction. In Britain, America, and Western Europe these days, it is simply not done to remark on the alien quality of Islam or indeed of any other culture or its members, for fear of the dreaded accusation of "racism". If one says that the people of Islam are "not like us"; or that the African "democracies" are in fact despotic parodies; or, worse, if one objects to the attempts of certain immigrant activists to introduce illiberal laws and customs into British society, then, behold, these remarks are taken as calls to commit a new holocaust, and exploited accordingly. If a minority displays "ethnic pride", this is cause for admiration. Should a majority politician try such a thing, it becomes "racism".

In other words, the "chauvinism" which *M* condemns is okay for "them" but not for "us". For "us" even the *idea* of "them" versus "us" is to be damned as unacceptable "chauvinism". It is this double standard which *inflames* "chauvinism" and gives ammunition to the ugly brand of Western politician who tries to play a racist hand.

Writers like *M* should explore this question a little more carefully—and with more sympathy for those among the majority who feel threatened by these double standards (and their exploitation by self-chosen "activists")—before indulging in facile homily.

HERB GREER

Manchester

AS I THOUGHT I made clear in these pages in May 1989, discussing the Rushdie affair, I'm not a cultural relativist. For me, Western humanism, tolerance, rationality, and open-mindedness are far superior to bigotry and chauvinism, which I detect and detest in fundamentalist Muslims just as much as in followers of Le Pen. And tolerance, in my view, should not tolerate its opposite. Hold your fire, Herb: we're on the same side.

M

London

Stent's Explanation

GUNTHER S. STENT's "Can We Explain the Mind?" (ENCOUNTER, March 1990) was a very clear statement of the problem, and one attempted solution of the relationship between science and morality. My only complaint is that no mention was made of Roger W. Sperry's efforts to solve the problem in a fashion that would appear to be more intellectually satisfactory.

Sperry, if I understand him correctly, challenges the conception of causality that has permeated science as well as philosophy for several centuries. Kant, for example, accepts Newtonian science as universal and then must introduce his dualism to make room for free will and morality. Sperry, in contrast, contends that nature admits of different types of causes and in the case of the human brain a downward causation is evident so that a kind of self-determinism takes place, which is what free will involves and morality requires. In Sperry's approach—outlined in his book *Science and Moral Priority: Merging Mind, Brain, and Human Values* (Columbia University Press, 1983)—there is no need for any kind of dualism, metaphysical or epistemological. But there is a need for recognising substance pluralism, namely, that reality admits of many kinds and types of beings, the varied interactions of which generate varied kinds of causes in nature. Plainly put, the production of lightning involves different kinds of causes from the production of a symphony or a metaphysical system.

In any case, a discussion of the explanation of mind, including free will and morality, needs to make mention of Roger W. Sperry's very interesting and possibly fruitful work.

TIBOR R. MACHAN

Auburn University
Alabama

If Hitler Won . . .

JOHN GRIGG's "Nobility and War" (ENCOUNTER, March 1990) is a curious piece of work. He debates whether Britain's World War I or World War II effort was "the nobler", and concludes that Britain's achievement in World War I was "morally superior" by far.

This has to be a peculiarly British exercise. Wars, particularly one of the scope and devastation of World War II, are seldom evaluated for their nobility. It is hard to think of an American historian making a similar evaluation, or an American journal that would find interest in the result.

The view that the 1939-45 War "was a genuine crusade against evil" and "may have succeeded . . . in making the world . . . safe for democracy" is, says Mr Grigg, the fruit of post-War myth-making, "assisted by a growing ignorance of history". He also sees Francis Williams's 1940 statement that World War II was "a people's war" upon whose issue "depends the total shape of the future", as more myth-making.

Anybody who was with the people of England during the harrowing years of World War II would find it hard to believe they did not back the War, or did not believe their entire future was at stake. Mr Grigg's approach makes one wonder whether he was there. But he was—serving in the Grenadier Guards, 1943-45.

It would seem that Mr Grigg himself is indulging in some myth-making. Hitler was not the Kaiser. The overwhelming majority of those who fought in World War II did not doubt that "the total shape of the future" was involved. The question that Mr Grigg dodges—far more important than any he raises—is: what kind of a world would it have been had Hitler won?

SIMON BOURGIN

Washington, D.C.

A Simple Question

IN "Societies Collapse, Faiths Linger On" (ENCOUNTER, March 1990) Kenneth Minogue refers to the way in which "Ronald Reagan was mocked for calling the Soviet Union 'the evil empire'". Surely, both for Reagan himself and for all of us who have been similarly mocked by Leftist trendies for agreeing with him, the ideal response would be modelled upon that of Bishop Hensley Henson to Archbishop Cosmo Gordon Lang. The Archbishop had objected to Henson's description, "proud, pompous and prelatical". Henson responded with a simple question: "To which of these terms is Your Grace taking exception?"

ANTONY FLEW

Bowling Green State University
Ohio

True-Blue Tory?

HIGH TREVOR-ROPER in his article on "The Peterhouse Effect" (ENCOUNTER, March 1990) tries to trace the pedigree of Thatcherism to Joseph Chamberlain. Surely not the Joseph Chamberlain who took into municipal ownership water and gas, and who founded the Municipal Bank in Birmingham, and was a protectionist and definitely not "a free-trader"?

It may well be that he was no true-blue Tory; he certainly wasn't a Thatcherite.

JOHN F. SPELLAR

Bromley
Kent

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Life & Letters Today

Bonn

FOUR MORE: **Helmut Kohl may be able to carry the burden of German unification on his broad shoulders, but he was officially warned yesterday that they are too broad—he is overweight even for a man of his height and needs to cut out the cakes and cream.**

Professor Günther Schleaf, head of the German Society for Nourishment, urged Chancellor Kohl to lose at least four stone.

A famous story concerning Mrs Thatcher confirms his preference for eating. Years ago, when they were both holidaying near Salzburg, he turned down a suggested private conversation, and was found later sitting alone in a café tucking into cakes.

Dr Kohl has his eyes set on becoming the longest-serving chancellor, as well as the first democratically-elected all-German chancellor, but he could already have achieved an historic milestone: the fattest contemporary statesman.

THE GUARDIAN

New York

IN A "NUPTIAL": *In the gossip arena, the word most often mangled is* **nuptial**.

There may be bite but no chew in **prenuptial** *agreement. The word* **nuptial** *is from the past participle of the Latin verb* **nubere**, *"to marry", which is also the root of* **nubile**, *"marriageable", or at least "apparently fully developed sexually", which is not the same thing. Use the plural to refer to a wedding ceremony, as in "I cannot make it to the* **nuptials**, *but I hope to be at the festive signing of the first post-nuptial agreement".*

Pronounce **nuptial** *NUP-shul, just as you pronounce the warlike martial MAR-shul. They are not NUP-chill or MAR-chill, and they are certainly not pronounced as if spelled "nuptual" or "martual". (On the other hand, you can pronounce* **victuals** *VIT-els, because this synonym for food is used only in dialect form.)*

INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE

London

PLASTER UNSTUCK: **A new advertising campaign by the government-funded Commission for Racial Equality has upset representatives of the black community by implying that pink plasters are racist: "Skin-coloured plasters can hurt".**

But the pharmaceutical group Smith Nephew, which manufactures two-thirds of plasters in Britain, found little demand when it researched the possibility of introducing plasters in different colours. Ethnic plasters have always proved to be less than commercially viable.

"Black people don't necessarily want black plasters." In any case, his company stocked a wide range of plasters that were transparent and would offend nobody's sensibilities.

SUNDAY TIMES

Boston

U- AND AGAIN-U: **Quux** *(interjection, slang) is used as an expression of mild disgust.* **Quux**—*like* **bagbiter** *(faulty hardware or software),* **glork** *(an interjection expressing mild surprise), and* **hungus** *(large, unwieldy)—is an example of the lexically fecund private language of computer scientists.* **Quux** *will probably never gain wide currency, but it is of interest none the less as an English term containing two contiguous* **u***'s.*

There are seven: **vacuum** . . . **residuum** . . . **continuum** . . . **menstruum** . . . **individuum** . . . **duumvirate** *("two people associated in high office or position") . . . and* **lituus** *(meaning variously a crooked staff carried by an augur, a curved trumpet, and a spiral).*

To this list of words, all of which are of Latin origin, at least two others can be added: **equus** *(also of Latin origin) and* **muumuu** *(borrowed from the Hawaiian mu'u mu'u).*

ATLANTIC MONTHLY

Washington, D.C.

DECLARING MAC-WAR: **The Big Mac is under attack. McDonald's, the world's largest fast-food company with yearly sales of 5 billion burgers, is being accused in full-page advertisements in newspapers across the United States of contributing to "the poisoning of America".**

"McDonald's, your hamburgers have too much fat", the advertisements claim in large black type. They were placed by Phil Sokolof, an Omaha businessman and multi-millionaire, who has spent $2.5m of his own money since 1985 in a campaign for a healthier diet.

Sokolof started his crusade after suffering a heart attack caused, in part, by high cholesterol.

He said he was not just aiming his campaign at McDonald's, but accuses the firm of being "the leading purveyor of fat in the world".

THE TIMES

New York City

DEMEANING: *Language police are becoming grotesquely overzealous. One self-appointed monitor said the word* **retarded** *was demeaning. Yet another would have us banish such useful, long-established English words as* **lame** . . . **maimed** . . . **affliction**. *But if a physical disability isn't an affliction, then what is it? Where does this sort of thing end? There are probably language police-persons out there who would turn thumbs down on* **bald** *(say* **hair deprived***) or* **short** *(***height disadvantaged** *is better).*

NEW YORK TIMES

London

MEN OR GODS: **The yoghurt makers Loseley have chosen an interesting emblem for their pots. The design, which illustrates the "Greek Style Yoghurt", is based on a pretty fifth-century BC painted cup, which is kept in Wurzburg. However, a significant alteration has come about. In the Loseley picture, the young enraptured lovers are dancing together. The authentic picture depicts a rather different scenario. The man is being sick over his charming female companion.**

EVENING STANDARD

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Realism, Eroticism, Mystery

Gustave Courbet. *Wheat Sifters*. Nantes Musée des Beaux-Arts

COURBET'S REALISM
Michael Fried

In this provocative reinterpretation of the painting of Gustave Courbet, Fried places the art of the great French Realist painter, for the first time, in the context of an antitheatrical tradition within French painting and art criticism. Fried's insight reveals a hitherto unrecognized aspect of Courbet's Realism – that his work is ultimately based on an ideal of self-representation.
16 color plates, 115 halftones

FRAGONARD
Art and Eroticism
Mary D. Sheriff

Boldly reappraising Fragonard's work, Sheriff finds, beyond the ostensible subject matter, a complex thematics of art, beholding, and eroticism. She reveals the technical skill and witty manipulation of academic standards by which the artist both courted and created his audience.
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GIORGIONE'S *Tempest*
Interpreting the Hidden Subject
Salvatore Settis
Translated by Ellen Bianchini

In a masterly piece of cultural detective work, Settis uses the mystery surrounding Giorgione's most enigmatic work, "The Tempest," to elucidate the relationship between artist, patron, work, and critic.
71 halftones

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